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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT COLNE FEN, EARITH

The Holme

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CAMBRIDGE ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Report No: 436

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT COLNE FEN, EARITH

The Holme
(SITE VII)

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CAMBRIDGE ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT
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Introduction

In advance of proposed gravel extraction, evaluation fieldwork was undertaken by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit in two former fields located within the proposed southern extension of Earith Quarry. The work took place between 1st and 15th May 2001. The quarry lies 1km southeast of the village of Somersham and northeast of Colne. The area of investigation covered some 8.4 ha of former arable fields known as *The Holme* lying immediately north of Holme Fen Drove and west of Earith Fen Drove (TL 765 385, Figure 1). The underlying geology consists of 1st/2nd terrace gravels with the fields lying at a height of 4.65-4.75m OD The work was funded throughout by Hanson Aggregates Ltd.

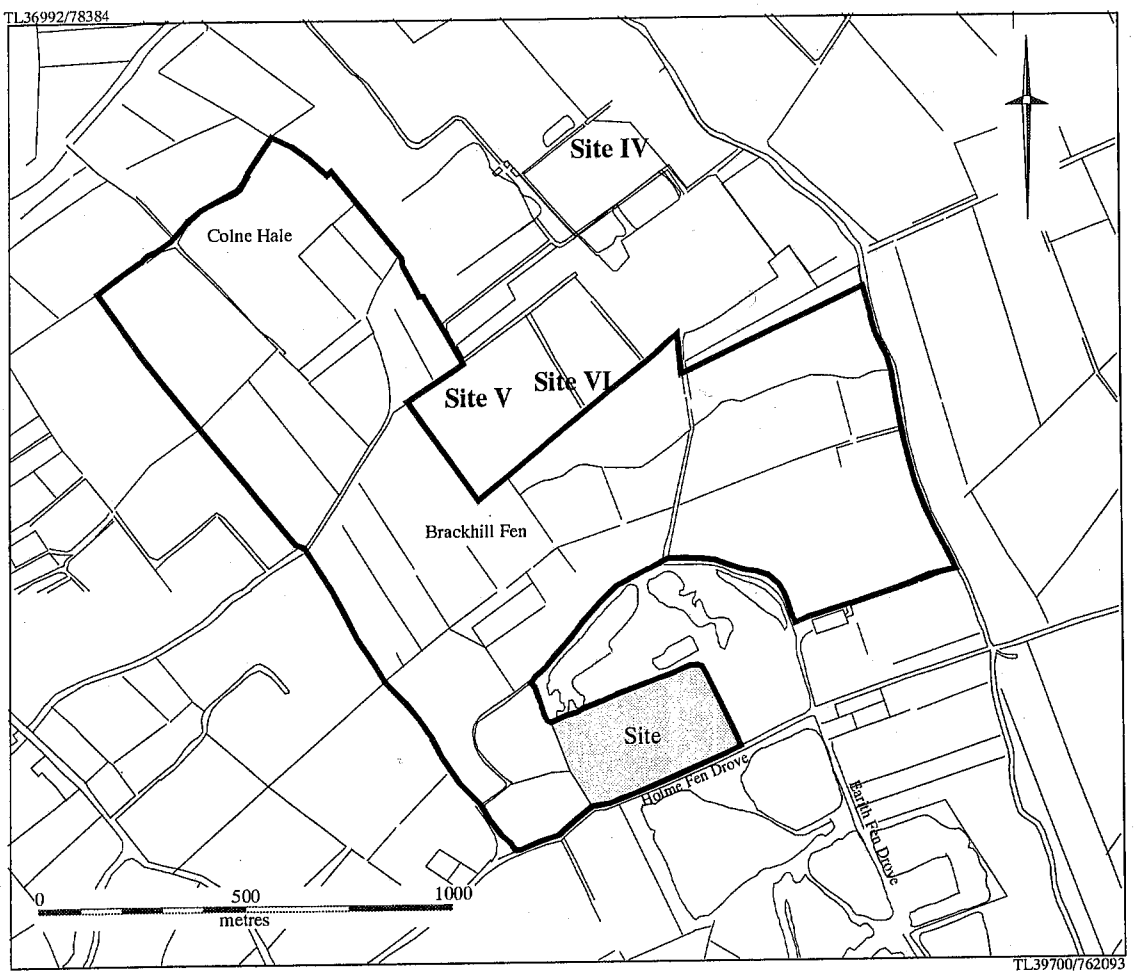


Figure 1: Site Location within Quarry Extension

Methodology

The agricultural topsoil was mechanically stripped within the 1,600m of evaluation trenches (2.00m wide; *c.* 3,200sqm total area). The topsoil/ploughsoil sealed the archaeology at an average depth of between 30-40cm. Subsoil consisted of a pale brown sandy silt this surviving to a depth of up to 0.10m to the southwest of the field within Trench 1. Here the subsoil had presumably been protected under the developed headlands along the boundary of the present field.

The Unit-modified version of the M.o.L.A.S. recording system was employed throughout. Trench plans were drawn at 1:50 with excavated sections drawn at 1:10. Within the text archaeological features (*e.g.* a ditch or a pit) are referred to with an 'F' prefix and are highlighted (*e.g.* **F. 1109**). Individual contexts that are referred to in the text are bracketed (*e.g.* [008]). Feature descriptions are recorded here within Appendix 5 and full context descriptions kept as part of the site archive at the CAU offices; the site code was EAR 01.

Archaeological Background

Little of archaeological interest had been previously noted within the application area, although C. F. Tebbutt investigated some earthworks in fields lying south of Holme Fen Drove and the current site (Tebbutt 1937). The pottery recovered by Tebbutt suggested a Roman date and indicated the proximity of settlement occupation. Aerial photographic survey showed several linear cropmarks within the investigation area, these possibly relating to this southern settlement (Garrow & Evans 2000: No 30 & 31).

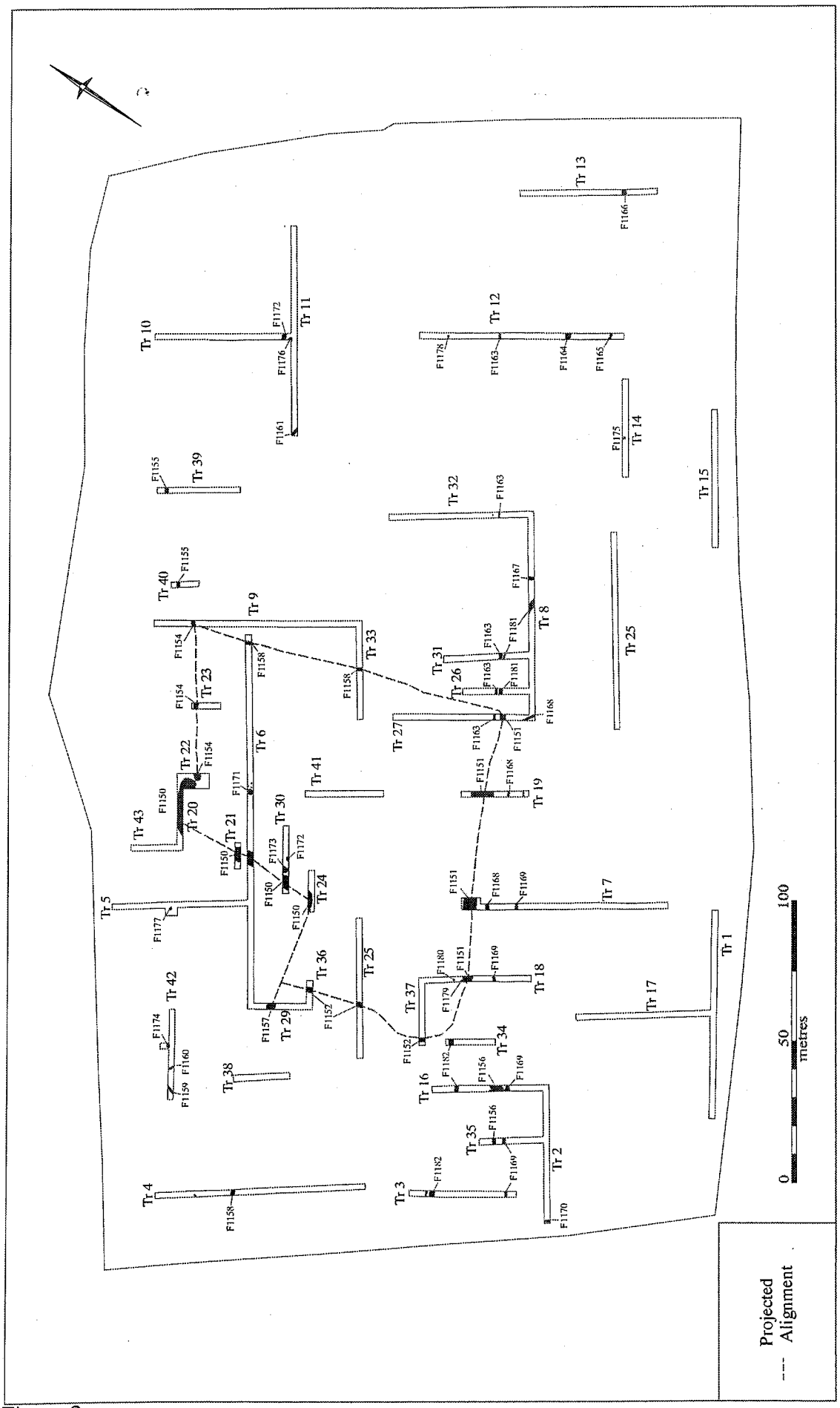
Investigation Results

Neolithic

Little evidence of Neolithic activity was revealed within the trenches although several worked flints recovered date to this period (Appendix 3).

Bronze Age

The majority of the features uncovered within the evaluation trenches appear to belong to the late Bronze Age. Of major importance was the discovery of a large Bronze Age enclosure system (Figure 2). Within this enclosure system the most apparent features were two very large ditches eat the north and centre of the field. At the north **F. 1150** formed a roughly 'S'-shaped northwestern limit to this system. The ditch entered Trench 24 from the west and turned north through Trenches 30, 6 & 21 and continued into Trench 20 where it turned east before terminating in Trench 22. For the most part this ditch was 5 metres wide and 2.00-2.40m deep (Figure 3). The sides of the ditch varied in steepness between the excavated sections although most profiles suggested a consistent gently curving base. The consecutive bands of silting and weathering suggest that the ditch was left to fill over time with no indication of deliberate backfilling. Lenses of iron pan and possibly water-lain silt suggest periodic wetness within the ditches, as do the presence of damp-preferring snails. The more gravelly nature of the fills lying to the north and west of the ditch suggest any bank may have lain along these sides although this was by no means conclusive.


Tr 1
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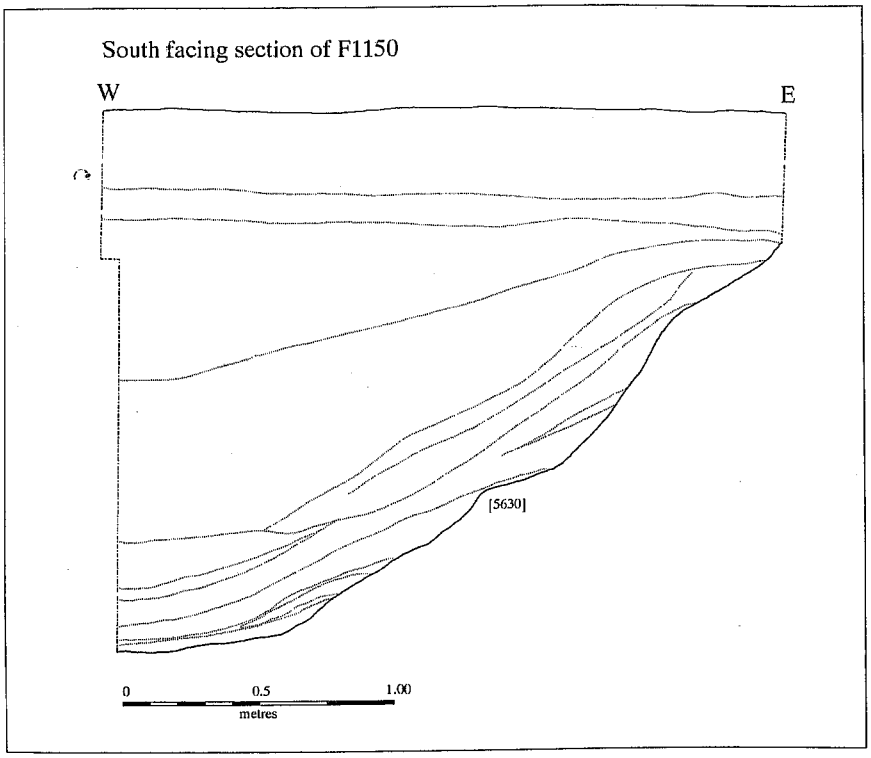
F1170
F1171
F1172
F1173
F1174
F1175
F1176
F1177
F1178
F1179
F1180
F1181
F1182
0
50
100
metres
Projected
Alignment

Figure 2



The western terminus of F. 1150 was not revealed during the evaluation, however, the possibility remains that the ditch does not finish but narrows significantly beyond Trench 29 to the west.

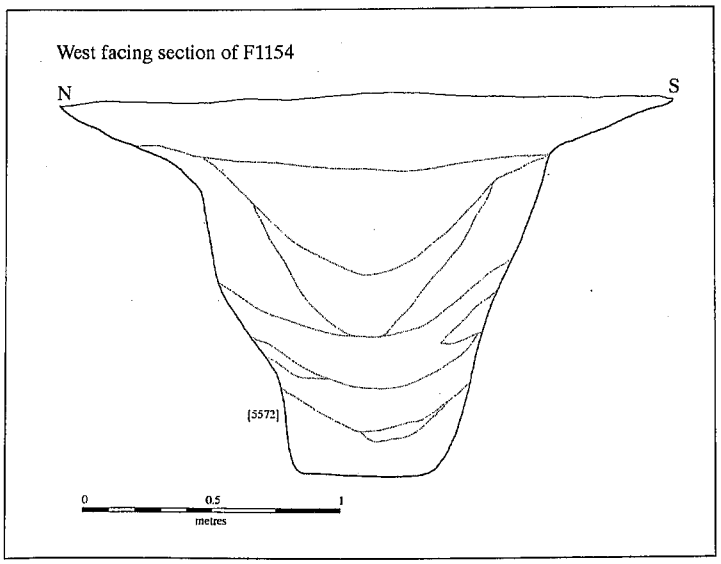


Figure 4

Running up to and respecting the eastern terminus of F. 1150 in Trench 22, is ditch **F. 1154** which also butts in this trench. This ditch could be traced to the east running through Trench 23 and into Trench 9, with F. 1154 possibly forming part of the northern side of the centrally enclosed area. While significantly smaller in size than F. 1150 the western termini of this ditch was still substantial at 2.40m wide and 1.40m deep with near vertical sides (Figure 4).

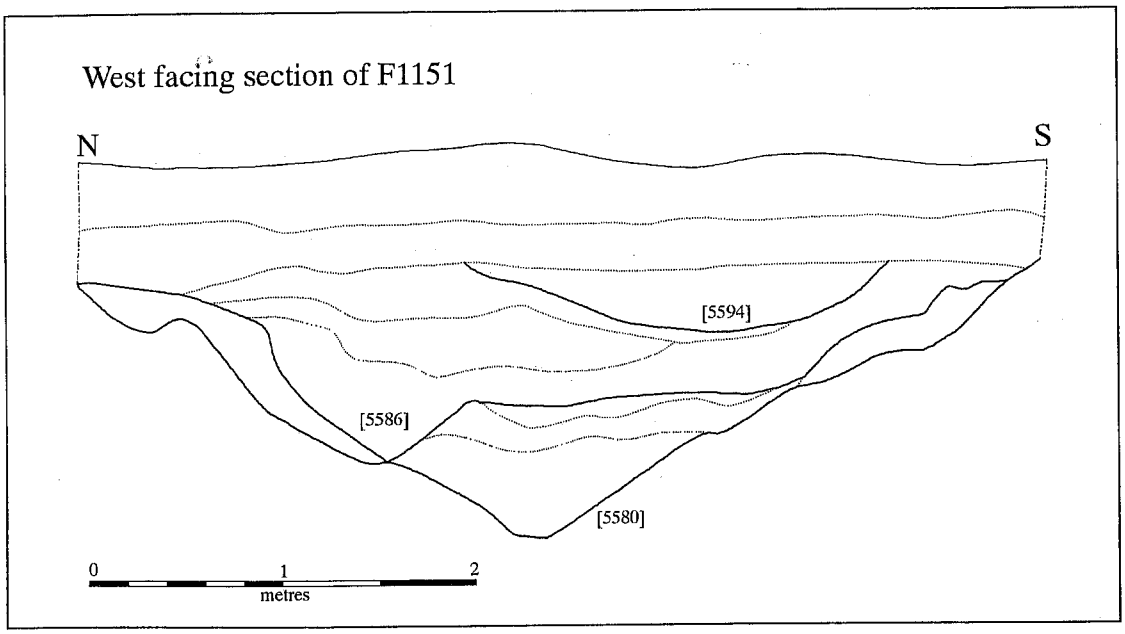


Figure 5

To the south of F. 1150 another large ditch section was seen with **F. 1151**, this revealed (from the west) in Trenches 18, 7, & 19. The similarity of ditches F. 1150 and F. 1151 in size (up to 4.90m wide and 2.00m deep) suggest they may be contemporary, although they do not mirror one another in plan (Figure 5). No eastern or western termini to this ditch were seen, either it butts beyond the excavated trenches or narrows and/or splits at its eastern and western ends.

From F. 1151 two ditches run north towards F. 1150 and F. 1154, perhaps marking the eastern and western sides to the enclosed area. Western ditch **F. 1152** is traced in Trenches 37, 25 and 36. Eastern ditch **F. 1153** runs north through Trenches 33 and the eastern end of Trench 6. Both of these ditches are much less substantial relative to F. 1150 and F. 1151, being 1.90-2.20m wide and up to 0.70m deep.

Few indicators of settlement activity were uncovered within the enclosed area. Three pits **F. 1171, F. 1172 & F. 1173** were located within Trenches 6 and 30, these being of similar size, shape and fill type (up to in 2.20m diameter and 0.75m deep filled with banded grey gravelly silts) suggesting perhaps similar function. Two of the pits (F.1171 & F.1172) also showed signs of recutting further, adding to their enigmatic nature. While storage is a possibility, the lack of artefactual evidence from their fills may suggest something other than domestic occupation. Several possible post holes located along the eastern side of the pits in Trench 6 may indicate some form of settlement or structures.

Little in the way of artefacts were found within the excavated fills of the larger ditches F. 1150 and F.1151, although the pottery recovered, some 10 sherds, date to the late Bronze Age (c. 1000 BC), several worked flints and some animal bone were also recovered (Appendix 1, 3 & 4). Of these 6 sherds were recovered from the upper fill of F. 1151 in Trench 27, these occurring alongside a relatively abundant charcoal spread and may be indicative of dumping from domestic activity.

From the lesser enclosure ditches only F. 1154, with seven sherds occurring alongside bone, flint and charcoal, suggested nearby occupation. More substantial evidence of occupation within the main enclosure area was seen in Trench 18. Here two large postholes, **F. 1179** and **F.1180** (0.40m in diameter and 0.50m deep), contained abundant charcoal and a considerable amount of pottery (18 sherds). Significantly, posthole F. 1180 cut into the silted fills of ditch F. 1151 suggesting structural activity well after the original ditch had been excavated.

That the enclosure (as delineated by ditches F. 1150-1154) was the foci of a wider paddock/field system, is suggested by several ditches that appear to radiate from the corners of the main enclosure core. From the presumed junction of ditches F.1150 and F.1152, ditch **F.1157** was observed running west through Trench 29 although the ditch does not appear in Trench 38. Similarly, ditch **F. 1158** in Trench 4 also fails to cross Trench 38. It is possible that these ditches are part of the same aligned ditch system and the trench placement coincides with a gap or entranceway through this projected line. Alternatively both these ditches may turn sharply north and re-appear as **F. 1159** and **F. 1160** as seen in Trench 42.

From the southwest corner of the enclosure ditch **F. 1156** can be traced running to the west through Trenches 16 and 35, although the problem with this system (if they are one and the same ditch) is the size of the ditch seen in Trench 16 opposed to that Trench 35. This suggests either the comparatively large ditch terminates beyond Trench 16 or that the ditch narrows significantly between Trench 16 and Trench 35. Ditch **F. 1169** also appears to radiate west from the southwest corner of the enclosure, traceable in Trenches 16 and 3.

From the southeast of the enclosure, ditch **F. 1181** runs east through Trenches 26 and 31 before turning sharply south through Trench 8, and apparently terminating before Trench 25. Similarly ditch **F. 1155** runs to the northeast from the northeast corner of the main enclosure through Trenches 40 and 39. As with the main enclosure these subsidiary divisions are difficult to interpret at this stage, but undoubtedly belong to the wider framework of the overall Bronze Age field/paddock system.

Outside the main enclosed area evidence for settlement was seen in Trench 42 with a burnt stone pit **F. 1174** (possibly the remains of a cooking trough). Trench 5 produced a cremation **F. 1177**, the burnt bones of an adult individual and a bone toggle were contained within a small bucket urn of Deverel-Rimbury type (N. Dodwell pers. comm.).

Two further pits, **F. 1176** in Trench 10 and **F. 1175** in Trench 14 were also revealed, devoid of finds these gave little clue as to their function.

Further settlement evidence is suggested with two pottery groups lying away from the main enclosure. One group containing the remains of a vessel was recovered from within the disturbed buried soil in Trench 1 (no cut *per se* was apparent). While the remains of another vessel was contained within small post hole/pit **F. 1178** within Trench 12. Both vessels dating to the late Bronze Age.

Ditches located within the eastern evaluation trenches (**F. 1164-F. 1166**) appear to have no direct traceable link to the enclosure system, but may ultimately prove to belong to the much wider Bronze Age system.

Iron Age

Despite the relative abundance of Iron age settlement to the east of the quarry along the fen-edge no activity dating to this period was observed, perhaps further indicating the preference of fen-edge location by these communities (Regan & Evans1998, 2000)

Roman

Evidence of Roman activity was confined to two east-west aligned ditches **F. 1168** in Trenches 7,19 and 8 and **F. 1169** running through Trenches 3, 35, 16, 18 and 7. A third ditch **F. 1170** in Trench 2, this time aligned north-south. Here it is suggested that the Bronze Age system was still apparent as an earthwork in the Roman period. This is not only suggested by the fact that the Roman system skirts along the southern edge of the earlier enclosur, but more significantly a ritually 'killed' pot (a 2nd century indented beaker, complete apart from two neatly perforated holes) had been placed within the upper fill of large ditch F.1151 in Trench 19.

The Roman ditches may demarcate the northern extent of enclosed fields belonging to the settlement located to the south as observed by Tebbutt in 1937. This possibly suggesting the area to the north of the system was open fields or larger fields whose boundaries are not located within the application area.

Discussion

A major ditched enclosure complex was uncovered within the evaluation. The complex appears centred on two massive ditch segments located to the north and centre of the present field. The large ditches appear connected by two lesser ditches and thus form a roughly rectilinear enclosure. A series of lesser but related paddocks systems radiate from the corners of this larger enclosure. The layout as a whole remains enigmatic in its nature. Recent excavations within the region have uncovered patterns of extensive Bronze Age enclosure particularly at Barleycroft Farm and Welland Bank (Evans and Knight 1997, Pryor 1998). In both these cases the enclosures suggested stock management and/or settlement, although neither example mirrors the ditched configuration seen here at Earith. The kinked 'S'-shape of the northern side of the enclosure may suggest it contains or respects something as yet unseen, possibly a structure although this is highly speculative. Few features that suggest settlement were apparent within the trenches, aside from the two post holes located within Trench 16. The excavated sections of the ditches also failed to produce artefactual quantities that would indicate nearby occupation, but this may have more to do with the limited nature of the evaluation rather than the absence of settlement. Indications of related occupation within the enclosure system/s are however hinted at

with the above mentioned structural evidence and with the presence of a burnt stone pit and the urned cremation.

A series of large pits were also uncovered but as with the large ditches there nature remains elusive. They again produced little in the way of artefacts although two showed evidence of recutting. While possibly settlement-related they could equally represent a pit alignment or large post holes.

As to the massiveness of the ditches, their size would not be out of place if related to barrow or henge building, however neither of these monumental models fit the systems layout. A defensive attribution is also not completely convincing, in that not all sides of the enclosure are bounded by these large earthworks. It may be that an, as yet, undetected palisade encloses the eastern and western sides of the system but this has to remain conjecture. The small quantities of animal bone recovered from the fills of the ditches, include cattle and sheep/goat, and possibly indicate the presence of stock within the enclosure system. Here again, however, the size of the ditches probably mitigate against the idea of stock retention as being their primary function.

Evidence for Bronze Age settlement within the Colne/Earith environs has so far been limited although not insignificant and it has necessarily been given less consideration than it is perhaps due. Given the previous emphasis and domination of the Iron Age and Roman landscapes uncovered in past excavations then this is perhaps partly excusable. However, enough has now been uncovered to consider this 'background' activity within the broader landscape, and this becomes more critical with the discovery of the large enclosure system. Beyond background scatters of flint seen within previous excavations (Sites I-VI, Regan & Evans 1998 & 2000; Regan forthcoming) other elements of a Bronze Age landscape use have been uncovered. The Ring-ditch revealed within Site IV could certainly have been a focus or nodal point along the wet margin and possibly subject to repeat visits in seasonal movements to/from the wet edge in the early Bronze Age. More sedentary activity is perhaps indicated by the remains of a post-built structure uncovered within Site V. Shallow traces of two ditches were revealed within Site VI and may be the remnants of a related enclosure/field system. While the ditches failed to produce any dating evidence, the close vicinity of possibly associated pits suggest a Bronze Age date. The problem here is that evidence of Bronze Age activity has until now been scattered and difficult to coherently place within the broader landscape of that period. Within the Barleycroft excavations (some 4 kms to the southwest of the present site) the relationship of monuments to fields and settlement is better understood. At Barleycroft the field systems and paddocks, while post-dating the Ring-ditches, respected these monumental structures using them as a focus and possibly demarcated boundaries within the wider landscape.

At Earith there is as yet no secure link between the uncovered Ring-ditch, evidence of settlement and the field systems, giving us a far from coherent picture of development through the Bronze Age period. While the majority of the pottery from the present site is late Bronze Age in date (Post Deverel-Rimbury), all the sherds recovered from the larger ditches derive from the upper fills, possibly indicating an earlier Middle Bronze Age date for their construction. These ditches perhaps conceived on a monumental scale, may have acted as a focus for later enclosure and possibly settlement with a series of radiating paddocks/sub-enclosures. Understanding the

development of the site then is of crucial importance in gaining a fuller picture of landscape use along this part of the fen-edge within the Bronze Age period.

Appendix 1: Prehistoric Pottery (M. Knight)

226 sherds (2429g) of prehistoric pottery were recovered from 19 separate contexts. The assemblage is exclusively later Bronze Age in date and with the possible exception of one vessel all belong to the post Deverel-Rimbury tradition (Barrett 1980). The exception consisted of a large part of a small 'stunted' bucket urn , Context [5577], which aside from its truncated appearance would normally be described as Deverel-Rimbury. The fact that cremated remains were found in association with this particular vessel does suggest that this attribution is reasonable even if the form does seem odd (J. Pollard pers. comm.) Although from an earlier tradition, chronologically the urn is consistent with the rest of the assemblage located towards the end of the Bronze Age at around 1000BC.

The paucity of decoration and propensity of coarse wares within the post Deverel-Rimbury assemblage suggests it cannot be too much later. Apart from the 'stunted' urn the vessel forms comprised either jars (round or slightly angular shoulder with concave and everted or upright rim) or bowls (tripartite angular shoulder, flared or everted rim; after Brown 1988). The decoration consisted of both light and heavy finger tipping on or immediately above the shoulders or occasionally as delicate pinching around the rim. One shoulder fragment, Context [5807], also had fine traces of two horizontal incised lines above the finger tipping. The identification of decorated wares over plainwares depended partly on the part of the vessel recovered as less than 20% of the rims were decorated whereas 100% of the shoulders showed signs of decoration (see Table 1).

Total Number of Rims	Number of Rims Decorated
11	**2**
Total Number of Shoulders	Number of Shoulders Decorated
4	**4**

Table 1: Location of Decoration

At least two of the fineware rim sherds showed signs of surface treatment, i.e. 'smoothing', but none appeared burnished. Four fabric types were identified and these occurred across the vessel forms with the exception of Fabric 2 which was unique to the 'stunted' bucket urn.

Fabric Types:

Fabric 1 – reddy-orange, grey or buff (exterior), black (interior), corky fabric with small flint and organic inclusions (unidentifiable voids)

Fabric 2 – reddy-orange, buff (exterior), black (interior), corky fabric with small organic inclusions (shell?)

Fabric 3 – reddy-orange (exterior), black (interior), corky fabric with shell inclusions

Fabric 4 – brown (exterior), black (interior), soapy fabric with small grog inclusions

As the result of numerous recent excavations of later Bronze Age settlements in and immediately around Cambridgeshire comparative assemblages are easy to find. The nearby excavations at Barleycroft Farm, Bluntisham (Evans & Knight 1998), for example have produced very similar forms from contexts associated with an enclosed longhouse and connected settlement. A single radiocarbon date from the enclosure ditch produced a date of 1260-970 BC (955 ± 35 bc; OxA-8109). At Whittlesey, near Peterborough, the King's Dyke West excavations (Knight 2000) have revealed extensive, unenclosed Late Bronze Age settlement evidence including eleven roundhouses of which one, House *X*, contained fragments of plain angular jars with everted rims.

Context	Sherd No.	Wgt	Fabric Type	MNV
5511	70	969g	1	2
5555	3	5g	1	1
5661	5	14g	3	1
5663	2	19g	1 & 4	2
5577	12	280g	2	1
5600	6	25g	1	1
5649	88	811g	1	4
5714	1	2g	1	1
5718	1	1g	1	1
5792	3	4g	1	1
5805			1	1
5807	2	38g	1	2
5808	6	17g	1	1
5810	2	4g	1	1
5813	18	231g	1	2
5831	2	5g	1	1
5833	2	6g	1	1
5838	2	8g	1	1

Table 2: Context-Pottery Details

Appendix 2: Environmental Bulk Samples (R.Ballantyne)

All twelve examined contexts contain negligible charred plant remains other than wood charcoal. Four ditch samples do, however, include well-preserved molluscan remains. The snails represented are characteristic of both open and damp, shady environments. Due to the large dimensions of the ditches it is possible the snails represent a combination of the surrounding area and local conditions within the ditches.

Methodology

All samples were processed by hand using bucket flotation. The flots were collected within a 300μm sieve, and the heavy residue washed over 1mm mesh. Both flots and heavy residues were dried prior to their scanning. The flots were examined using a low-power binocular microscope. The heavy residue fraction greater than 4mm was sorted by eye for artefactual remains only. The residues have been kept, should further work be requested. Identifications of molluscs were made using Beedham (1972) and Kerney & Cameron (1996). The results are summarised in table form at the end of this report.

Preservation

Very few charred plant remains other than charcoal are present, which could be a product both of the nature of the site, and the quality of preservation itself. Much of the wood charcoal present is highly fragmented. The few charred plant macro-remains are fragmented and pitted.

There are good snail remains in four ditch contexts. The snail-rich fills are mainly secondary, and are presumably linked to a slower rate of infilling compared to the substantial redeposited-natural primary fills. The lack of snail remains within the primary fills suggests that the shells are archaeological, rather than geologically derived.

Some intrusive material is present. Uncharred seeds of orache (*Atriplex patula/prostrata*), chickweed (*Stellaria media*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) are occasionally within the samples. Low numbers of the burrowing snail *Ceciliodes acicula* also occur.

Plant Remains

A single seed of wild or cultivated oat (*Avena* sp.) is present within ditch silt [5671]. Ditch fill [5826] contains one charred fragment of hazelnut (*Corylus avellana*) and a small vetch or wild pea seed (*Vicia/Lathyrus* sp.). No other contexts contained any charred plant macro-remains, and it is difficult to infer anything on the basis of this limited material.

Low amounts of mainly small (<4mm) charcoal fragments occur within all the contexts. Ditch fills [5629] and [5642] are virtually devoid of all charred material, as is pit [5631].

It seems likely that accumulations of 'background' surface debris are represented within the ditch contexts, suggesting occasional burning events in the area, rather than any specific activities.

Molluscan Remains

Good mollusçan remains are present in four contexts. The discussion here is based upon those taxa present within the sample flots. The heavy residues have not been sorted for snail remains, but have been kept.

[5587] – secondary ditch fill

The snails indicate a damp, shady environment with the dominant taxa *Carychium minimum/tridentatum, Discus rotundatus* and *Clausilia c.f. bidentata.* No open-area taxa are present, other than a single shell of *Vallonia costata.*

[5642] – secondary ditch fill, and [5629] – primary silts within ditch

Numerous snail shells were recovered from [5642]. Most represent damp or occasionally flooded conditions, such as *Carychium minimum/tridentatum, Lymnaea trunculata* and *Vertigo angustior.* Some of the taxa are characteristic of shaded places, particularly numerous *Aegopinella/Oxychilus* spp. There are also, however, many shells of *Vallonia exentrica/pulchella* which are typically found on open land. The main taxa within [5629] mirror those within [5642], but occur in much lower quantities overall – *Carychium* spp., *Cochlicopa lubrica/lubricella* (which is catholic), *Vallonia excelsior/pulchella*, and *Aegopinella/Oxychilus* spp.

[5671] – secondary ditch fill

A limited range of taxa are present, of which the open-air species *Vallonia excelsior/pulchella* are greatest in quantity. As with [5642] and [5629], the presence of *Vallonia* spp. contrasts with that of *Aegopinella/Oxychilus* spp. which usually occur in shady, damp locations.

The molluscan assemblages within the ditch fills appear to be the product of two differing environments, as suggested by the repeated occurrence of shade-associated and open land taxa (*Aegopinella/Oxychilus* spp. and *Vallonia* spp. respectively). The combination could be the product of snails representative of ditch-conditions and the surrounding area both becoming incorporated into the fills. Disentangling sources is difficult, but it may be suggested that the ditches provided a damp, shady 'niche' within an otherwise open environment. Only fill [5587] contains snails solely associated with shady conditions.

Conclusions

The few charred plant remains suggest that, in addition to poor preservation, only occasional or limited charring activity may have occurred in relation to the features excavated.

The molluscan remains demonstrate good preservation within certain ditch contexts. Whilst they indicate damp, shady conditions (which might be expected within such deep ditch contexts) the repeated occurrence of *Vallonia* spp. suggests some open or cleared land nearby.

sample number		<210>	<211>	<212>	<213>	<214>	<215>	<216>	<217>	<218>	<219>	<221>	<222>
context		[5577]	[5649]	[5671]	[5587]	[5765]	[5825]	[5826]	[5827]	[5817]	[5829]	[5831]	[5642]
feature type		cremation	p/h?	ditch	ditch	ditch	ditch	ditch	ditch	posthole	ditch	pit	ditch
description		all	all	2° fill	2° fill	3° fill	-	-	-	all	1° fill	1° fill	2° fill
sample volume/ litres		15	15	8	15	12	1.5	2	1.5	3	11	10	14
fraction examined		1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1
PLANT MACRO-REMAINS													
Corylus avellana nutshell	hazelnut							1					
Atriplex patula/prostrata	common/spear-leaved orache	- u						- u	- u			+ u	
Stellaria media	chickweed							- u					
Rubus fruticosus agg.	bramble	+ u											
small *Vicia/Lathyrus* sp. (<2mm)	vetch/wild pea							1					
Avena sp.	wild oat			1									
small charcoal (<2mm)		+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+	+++	+++	+++	+	++	++
med. charcoal (2-4mm)		+++	+++	++	+++	+		++	++	++	-	-	-
large charcoal (>4mm)		++	++	+	++	-		+		+		-	
- vitrified charcoal									+				
fired clay			+										
bone fragments			- burnt									-	
small bone				++	+								
fish scale			-										
fungal sclerotia			+									-	
MOLLUSCAN REMAINS													
Lymnaea truncutata	stagnant and slow water												+
Carychium minimum/tridentatum	generally well vegetated; wet/damp				++						+		+++
Cochlicopa lubrica/lubricella	catholic			-							+		++
Vertigo angustior	very wet, grassy marshland; flood debris												+
Pupilla c.f. muscorum	dry, exposed places			- juvenile									+
Lauria cylindracea	wood/ rocks/ grassland												+
Vallonia costata	dry, open places				-								
Vallonia excentrica/pulchella	open, damp and/or dry habitats			++							+		+++
Ena obscura	woods/hedges/walls - shady												-
Discus rotundatus	moist, sheltered places				++								
Vitrea sp.	catholic			-	-						-		+
Aegopinella/Oxychilus sp.	moist & shady places			+	-						+		+++
Cochlodina laminata	shaded places - in ground litter				-								
Clausilia c.f. bidentata	mod. moist rocks, wood, hedges				+						-		+
Trichia sp.	catholic			+	-								++
Cepaea c.f. hortensis	variable: woods, grassland, hedges				-						-		-
juvenile indet.				+	++						+		+++

Table 3

KEY:

'+++' >50 items, '++' 10-50 items, '+' <10 items, '-' 1 or 2 items

'u' uncharred, probably modern

Appendix 3: The Faunal Remains (A. Clarke)

The assemblage

A very small and poorly preserved assemblage was recovered from the site, numbering 64 fragments. The small size of the assemblage is an obvious limiting factor; compounded by the fact that 87.3% (55 fragments) of the bone is unidentifiable.

Method

For the purpose of this assessment the entire assemblage was quickly scanned in order to gain an insight into the species present and to highlight any patterns evident in element distribution, age profiles, butchery and spatial distribution. All the bone was identified using Schmid (1972) and the Cambridge Archaeological Unit reference collection. No attempt was made at this time to distinguish between the bones of sheep and goats. These bones are quoted as sheep/goat.

Results

The faunal remains contained in the assemblage were recovered wholly from the Bronze Age enclosure ditch system with no one element producing significantly more than any other. As can be seen from Table 1 below, there are only 8 identifiable fragments within the assemblage resulting in the situation that the only interpretation that can be made with any confidence, is that domestic cattle, sheep/goat were present on the site. The badger remains are considered to be a natural intrusion rather than the result of human exploitation.

Species	NISP
Cattle	6
Sheep/goat	1
Badger	1
Unidentifiable	55
Total	**63**

Table 4 : Number of identified specimens

Appendix 4: The Worked Flint (C. Conneller)

This is a small assemblage of 16 pieces of worked flint. As with other assemblages from Earith, the material from the evaluation is of mixed date, spanning the Neolithic to the Bronze Age. Two blades (from [5503] and [5848]), one with traces of utilisation, provide evidence for a Neolithic (or even a Mesolithic) presence, whereas a fine, extensively retouched scraper (from [5663]) is likely to date to the Bronze Age. Technologically the material ranges in quality from the two fine blades, with prepared platforms, to shatter fragments and pieces with incipient cones, indicative of uncontrolled flaking.

Category	**No.**	*%*
Tools:	***2***	***12.5***
Scraper	1	6.3
Retouched/utilised	1	6.3
Debitage:	***14***	***87.5***
Blade	2	12.5
Flake	11	68.75
Chunk	1	6.3
Total	**16**	**100**

Table 5

Appendix 5: Context Descriptions

In total 353 context numbers were allocated, of these 211 were given to features that were tested but turned out to be natural or geological in origin. For the most part these were filled with pale brown or darker brown sandy silts and while their descriptions are kept in the C.A.U. archive they are not listed below.

Context	Tr		Feature		Description
5627	6	f	1150	ditch	Light brown silty sand
5628	6	f	1150	ditch	Light grey brown sandy silt
5629	6	f	1150	ditch	Mixed orange to pale grey/white silts and gravels
5630	6	c	1150	ditch	Steep upper sides more gradual lower down with shallow curving base, measures 5.00m wide is 2.00m deep
5631	24	f	1150	ditch	Yellow brown gravelly silt
5632	24	f	1150	ditch	Red brown sandy silt
5633	24	f	1150	ditch	Red brown sandy silt and gravel
5634	24	f	1150	ditch	Red brown sandy silt
5635	24	f	1150	ditch	Dark brown gravel
5636	24	f	1150	ditch	Dark red brown silt
5637	24	f	1150	ditch	Dark brown silt
5638	24	f	1150	ditch	Red brown silt
5639	24	f	1150	ditch	Mid grey silt
5640	24	f	1150	ditch	Yellow brown sandy silt
5641	24	f	1150	ditch	Yellow brown sandy gravel
5642	24	f	1150	ditch	Pale grey silt sand
5643	24	c?	1150	ditch	Possible re-cut
5644	24	f	1150	ditch	Orange sandy silt
5645	24	f	1150	ditch	Yellow grey silt with iron pan
5646	24	f	1150	ditch	Pale grey silty sand
5647	24	c	1150	ditch	Corner of large ditch full dimensions unknown, over 2.40m deep
5821	18	f	1150	ditch	Yellow red brown sandy silt
5822	18	f	1150	ditch	Red brown sandy silt
5580	7	c	1151	ditch	Shallow irregular sides with rounded base, measures 4.80m wide is 2.00m deep
5581	7	l	1151	ditch	Dark brown peaty clay
5582	7	f	1151	ditch	Mid red brown silty sand clay
5583	7	f	1151	ditch	Light grey gravel
5584	7	f	1151	ditch	Dark grey gravel
5585	7	f	1151	ditch	Dark grey gravel
5586	7	f	1151	ditch	Mid grey clayey gravel
5587	7	f	1151	ditch	Mid grey silt with frequent charcoal
5588	7	f	1151	ditch	Orange grey silt
5589	7	f	1151	ditch	Red orange brown sandy silt
5590	7	f	1151	ditch	Red orange brown sandy silt
5768	7	f	1151	ditch	Light grey clay with charcoal/manganese? flecks
5807	18	f	1151	ditch	Dark grey brown silt
5808	27	f	1151	ditch	Dark grey brown silt
5809	28	f	1152	ditch	Mid brown silt
5810	28	f	1152	ditch	Mid brown silt and gravel
5811	28	f	1152	ditch	Red clayey gravel
5812	28	c	1152	ditch	Uneven sides and flat base, measures 1.60m wide is 0.65m deep

5849	6	f	1153	ditch	Mid grey brown silt not fully excavated
5661	22	f	1154	ditch	Mid to dark red brown silty sand
5662	22	f	1154	ditch	Mid grey brown silty sand
5663	22	f	1154	ditch	Red brown silty sand
5664	22	f	1154	ditch	Red brown gravelly silt
5671	22	f	1154	ditch	Mid grey brown silt
5672	22	c	1154	ditch	Steep sides with flat base, measures 2.40m wide is 1.40m deep
5730	9	f	1155	ditch	Mid to light brown sandy silt
5731	9	c	1155	ditch	Steep sides tapering to flattish base, measures 0.95m wide is 0.56m deep
5738	9	f	1155	ditch	Red brown silty sand
5648	16	c	1156	ditch	Steep sides and flattish base, measures 4.00m wide is 1.70m deep
5651	16	f	1156	ditch	Mid to dark grey silty sand
5652	16	f	1156	ditch	Mid brown silty sand and pea grit
5653	16	f	1156	ditch	Coarse orange red sand and gravel
5654	16	f	1156	ditch	Coarse orange red sand and gravel
5655	16	f	1156	ditch	Mid grey brown sandy silt
5656	16	c	1156	ditch	Oval? shallow hollow with concave base measures 0.20m deep
5657	16	f	1156	ditch	Mid grey sandy silt
5658	16	f	1156	ditch	Mid grey brown sandy silt
5659	16	f	1156	ditch	Mid grey silt
5660	16	c	1156	ditch	Circular with concave profile, measures 0.30m in diameter is 0.10m deep
5616	4	f	1158	ditch	Red brown compacted silt
5617	4	f	1158	ditch	Mid grey brown silt
5618	4	f	1158	ditch	Pale grey silt
5619	4	c	1158	ditch	Steep V shaped profile, measures 1.20m wide is 0.75m deep
5850	6	f	1159	ditch	Light brown sandy silt
5851	42	c	1159	ditch	Steep sides and tapered base, measures 0.65m wide is 0.30m deep
5852	42	f	1160	ditch	Light brown sandy silt
5853	42	c	1160	ditch	Steep sides with rounded base, measures 0.70m wide is 0.42m deep
5673	11	f	1161	ditch	Pale grey sandy silt
5674	11	c	1161	ditch	Steep sides with flattish base, measures 0.75m wide is 0.40m deep
5677	10	f	1162	ditch	Dark red brown clay silt
5678	10	f	1162	ditch	Red brown silt
5679	10	f	1162	ditch	Yellow brown silty sand
5680	10	f	1162	ditch	Grey red brown silty sand
5681	10	c	1162	ditch	Steep sides with flattish base, measures 1.50m wide is 0.62m deep
5575	3		1163	ditch	Pale brown silty sand
5576	3		1163	ditch	Steep sides and flattish base, measures 0.40m wide is 0.23m deep
5668	12	f	1163	ditch	Light to red brown sandy clay
5669	12	c	1163	ditch	Steep to gradual sides with concave base, measures 0.60m wide is 0.30m deep
5784	31	f	1163	ditch	Pale brown silt
5785	31	c	1163	ditch	Concave sides and base, measures 0.60m wide is 0.20m deep
5792	26	f	1163	ditch	Red brown silty clay
5793	26	c	1163	ditch	Concave sides and base, measures 0.70m wide is 0.20m deep

5814	32	c	1163	ditch	Concave sides and base, measures 0.40m wide is 0.17m deep
5815	32	f	1163	ditch	Grey brown sandy silt
5665	12	f	1164	ditch	Pale grey sandy silt
5666	12	f	1164	ditch	Compact red brown gravel
5667	12	c	1164	ditch	Steep sides with concave base, measures 1.55m wide is 0.76m deep
5670	12		1165	ditch	Red brown silty sand
5775	13	f	1166	ditch	Mid yellow brown silt
5776	13	c	1166	ditch	Concave sides and base, measures 0.70m wide is 0.20m deep
5606	8	f	1167	ditch	Light brown sandy silt
5607	8	c	1167	ditch	Irregular sides and flattish base, measures 0.90m wide is 0.20m deep
5593	8	f	1168	ditch	Light brown sandy silt
5594	8	c	1168	ditch	Regular 45 degree sloping sides with slightly rounded base, measures 0.75m wide is 0.20m deep
5736	7	f	1168	ditch	Mid grey silty clay
5737	7	c	1168	ditch	Gently sloping sides with concave base, measures 1.20m wide is 0.33m deep
5565	3	f	1169	ditch	Red brown sandy silt
5566	3	c	1169	ditch	Steep concave profile, measures 0.45m wide 0.18m deep
5608	16	f	1169	ditch	Mid brown grey silt
5609	16	f	1169	ditch	Mid brown grey silt
5610	16	f	1169	ditch	Light brown silty clay
5611	16	f	1169	ditch	Mid brown orange silt
5612	16	f	1169	ditch	Dark brown orange silt
5613	16	c	1169	ditch	Steep sides with flat base, measures 2.00m wide is 0.85m deep
5614	16	f	1169	ditch	Mid brown grey silt
5615	16	c	1169	ditch	Steep sided ditch not fully excavated measures 1.20m wide
5734	7	f	1169	ditch	Mid grey silty clay
5735	7	c	1169	ditch	Gradual sides with flattish base, measures 0.80m wide is 0.25m deep.
5563	2	f	1170	ditch	Dark red brown silty gravel
5564	2	c	1170	ditch	Steep sides with rounded base, measures 0.75m wide and 0.29m deep
5831	6	f	1171	pit	Grey sandy silt and gravel
5832	6	f	1171	pit	Mid grey brown silty clay
5833	6	f	1171	pit	Mid grey brown silt
5834	6	f	1171	pit	Red brown silty gravel
5835	6	f	1171	pit	Pale red brown water-lain silt
5836	6	f	1171	pit	Mid grey gravelly silt clay
5837	6	f	1171	pit	Red brown silty sand and gravel
5838	6	f	1171	pit	Red brown silty gravel
5839	6	f	1171	pit	Mid grey brown silt and gravel
5840	6	f	1171	pit	Pale brown water-lain silt
5841	6	c	1171	pit	Circular with steep sides and flat base, measures 1.70m in diameter is 0.40m deep
5842	6	c	1171	pit	Circular with steep sides and rounded base, measures 2.20m in diameter is 0.70m deep
5801	30	f	1172	pit	Light brown to orange brown sandy silt
5802	30	c	1172	pit	Oval with steep sides and flat base, measures 1.60m wide is 0.57m deep
5803	30	f	1173	pit	Light grey to orange brown sandy silt
5804	30	c	1173	pit	Steep to near vertical sides and flattish base, measures

					1.40m wide is 0.72m deep
5825		f	1174	pit	Dark grey to black silt ash and burnt stones
5826		f	1174	pit	Black silt ash and burnt stones
5827		f	1174	pit	Mixed mid grey silt
5828		c	1174	pit	Oval with gentle sides and flat base, measures
5675	10	f	1176	pit	red brown silt
5676	10	c	1176	pit	Sub circular with concave base, measures 0.90m wide is 0.35m deep
5577	5		1177	crem	Cremation pot and fill
5578	5		1177	crem	Dark grey brown silty clay with frequent charcoal
5579	5		1177	crem	Oval with vertical sides and flattish base, measures 0.88m x 0.60m is 0.21m deep
5649	12	f	1178	post	Dark grey sandy silt with charcoal
5650	12	c	1178	post	Circular with steep sides and concave base, measures 0.50m in diameter is 0.45m deep
5813	18		1179	post	Dark grey silty sand
5820	18	f	1179	post	Pale grey brown silty ash
5805	18	f	1180	post	Mid to dark grey sandy silt with charcoal
5806	18	c	1180	post	Rectangular with near vertical sides, measures 0.50m wide is 0.52m deep
5604	8	f	1181	ditch	Yellow clayey silt with frequent charcoal
5605	8	c	1181	ditch	Steep sides tapering to narrow gullied base, measures 1.90m wide is 0.80m deep
5786	31	f	1181	ditch	Pale red brown silt
5787	31	c	1181	ditch	Concave sides and base, measures 1.30m wide is 0.60m deep
5794	26	f	1181	ditch	Red brown gravelly silt
5795	26	f	1181	ditch	Pale grey red silt
5796	26	c	1181	ditch	Concave sides and base, measures 1.35m wide is 0.62m deep
5573	3		1182	ditch	Pale red brown sandy silt
5574	3		1182	ditch	Gradual sides with rounded base, measures 1.75m wide is 0.42m
5823	30	f	1183	ditch	Light grey brown sandy silt
5824	30	c	1183	ditch	Steep sides and flat base, measures 1.00m wide is 0.54m deep

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