Dimmock’s Cote Quarry, Northern Extension, Wicken, Cambridgeshire

Desktop Assessment

OA East Report No: 1207
NGR: TL 5450 7260
Dimmock's Cote Quarry, Northern Extension

Desk-Based Assessment

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Summary

In September 2010 Oxford Archaeology East conducted a desktop assessment to examine the available historical and archaeological resources relating to 9ha of land to the north of Dimmock's Cote quarry. The development area is sited to the north of a series of archaeological interventions conducted by OA East (previously CCC AFU) between 1993 and 2010.

The study area encompasses a circular area of approximately 1.5km diameter and has revealed an extensive prehistoric landscape along with evidence for Iron Age to Medieval activity.
1 Introduction

1.1 Location, Geology and Topography

1.1.1 The lime quarry at Dimmock's Cote lies 2km to the west of the village of Wicken and 8km to the south of Ely. Five hundred metres to the west of the quarry lies the River Cam, while Wicken Fen lies some 2km to the southwest and Soham Lode 2.5km to the north. The quarry lies on the northern side of the A1123 that runs between Stretham and Wicken. In the immediate vicinity of the site lie the farms of Red Barn and High Fen.

1.1.2 The site lies directly to the north of the quarry and encompasses a single field of 9ha which extends from High Fen Road to the east and Fodder Fen Drove to the west.

1.1.3 In this area, the Jurassic Upware Limestone forms a promontory rising to about 5m OD that reaches out into the Fens (BGS 188). The promontory is surrounded on its north-eastern, western and south-eastern borders by Padney, Stretham, North, Adventurers and Wicken Sedge Fens. To the northeast and west lie the infilled lake basins of Soham and Stretham Mere. Many of these fenland meres survived into the historic period, having once formed significant wetland habitats in the prehistoric and later landscape.

1.1.4 Analysis of the coastal evolution of the Fenlands by Shennan suggests that the Wicken promontory has lain enclosed by fen since at least 4000BP (Shennan 1994: 70). The upland freshwater junction lay at about -1m OD in around 3800BP (Early Bronze Age). Marine and brackish water sediments were deposited less than 10km to the north of the Wicken promontory (Shennan 1994: 71). The surrounding fenland area has been influenced by peat formation since the prehistoric period whilst other areas within the Fens have been affected by recurrent marine incursions.
2.1 The Historic Environment Record (HER)

A search was conducted of the Historic Environment Records for the area shown in Fig 2. The results are presented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HER No.</th>
<th>Grid Ref.</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00241A</td>
<td>TL 5420 7260</td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>Post medieval debris in partially filled ditches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06973</td>
<td>TL 5422 7224</td>
<td>Ro</td>
<td>Ditch and sherds of unknown date in a chalk pit. Destroyed. 3 skeletons unearthed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06979</td>
<td>TL 5410 7190</td>
<td>Mes</td>
<td>No further info. Original card missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06980</td>
<td>TL 5430 7180</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Late BA winged axe found at Fodderfen Drove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06981</td>
<td>TL 5430 7210</td>
<td>Ro</td>
<td>Ro pottery scatter, bone, iron buckle, tile, samian, Nene valley (source unknown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06982</td>
<td>TL 5400 7220</td>
<td>Ro</td>
<td>Ro pottery, important scatter, TL 5402 7226 to TL 5407 7243. JB provisionally dated to C4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06985</td>
<td>TL 5440 7300</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>Cropmarks 1949, ditch visible on ground – John Bromwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06988</td>
<td>TL 5470 7320</td>
<td>Neo</td>
<td>Neo polished flint axe with flattening for hafting. Possibly TL 5470 7320 but could be TL 5490 7330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06989</td>
<td>TL 5480 7310</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Flints, 2 round scrapers, 1 oblong scraper, 7 flakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06990</td>
<td>TL 5490 7310</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Flint axe, scrapers, micro-cores etc. Find spot given as 'Shaws Drove' reported H Hawes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06991</td>
<td>TL 5480 7320</td>
<td>Neo</td>
<td>Neo flints reported by Hawes in 1955. Possibly same as 06692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09229</td>
<td>TL 5470 7310</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Field boundary (unlikely to be archaeological feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10206</td>
<td>TL 547 731</td>
<td>Un</td>
<td>Enclosures and Droves. Hall fenland Survey. Probable settlement area at TL 5460 7300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10490</td>
<td>TL 543 726</td>
<td>Ro</td>
<td>Earthworks in pasture. Identified from AP by Ben Robinson in 1992. Roman pottery recovered from field walking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10524</td>
<td>TL 5440 7230</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>1992 Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11178</td>
<td>TL 5407320</td>
<td>Un</td>
<td>Linear ditches forming angled shape possibly associated with settlement at TL 5460 7300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11187</td>
<td>TL 5460 7240</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>An excavation. 7th September - 4th October 1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11684</td>
<td>TL 5410 7230</td>
<td>Ro</td>
<td>Steel yard, weight found at approx. grid ref.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCB 15806</td>
<td>TL 5470 7240</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Evaluation 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCB 18233</td>
<td>TL 5470 7240</td>
<td>BA, IA, RO</td>
<td>Excavation 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCB 19098</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>Medieval headlands and ridge and furrow identified by Rog Palmer for Dimmock's Cote AP assessment 2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2 Cartographic Evidence
2.2.1 A number of OS maps were consulted:

- 1887 Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely 1:2500
- 1902 Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely 1:2500
- 1903 Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely 1:10,560
- 1926 Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely 1:2500
- 1926-1927 Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely 1:10,560
- 1952 – 1953 Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely 1:10,560

2.2.2 The development area is shown as agricultural land throughout the mapping sequence. The 1887 map shows a track running through the centre of the field however this is the only map in which it appears. There are no other field divisions or boundaries recorded.

2.3 Aerial Photographic Survey
2.3.1 Aerial photographic survey which covers the study area was carried out by Rog Palmer (Air Photo Services) in 2002 which was subsequently updated in 2009. The full report is appended in Gilmour et al 2010.

2.3.2 In summary, the predominant archaeological features in the study area are the headlands remaining from medieval cultivation (Fig 3). The headlands form the usual pattern of regularly spaced strips except for the angled junction visible in the centre of the proposed extension area (Dimmock's Cote, Northern Extension). The changes in direction may represent changes in topography (Rog Palmer 2009 in Gilmour et al 2010: 55).

2.3.3 An area of ditched features surviving as slight earthworks were identified directly to the west of the development area. The ditches, forming rectilinear fields/enclosures are on two alignments, a north-south orientation and a northwest-southeast orientation. These features are likely to extend into the site. A further area of earthworks situated to the south of Dimmock's Cote Quarry are also on a similar alignment.

2.4 Geophysical Survey (Appendix B)
2.4.1 A geophysical survey was conducted by GSB Prospection Ltd on behalf of Andy Josephs. The full report can be found in Appendix B.

2.4.2 In summary, the general level of background magnetic response is low, with many highlighted anomalies being comparatively weak. However, a number of anomalies have been identified as being of possible archaeological interest including possible field systems and enclosures and an area of increased magnetic response suggestive of more intense settlement. A single circular anomaly measuring 8m in diameter may also be of interest.

2.5 Archaeological Excavations and Surveys
2.5.1 Several excavations have previously taken place within the quarry, in the area immediately to the south of the current investigation (Fig. 4). These have revealed features of Neolithic to Medieval date (Bray 1992, Schlee 1993, Kemp 2002, Kemp & Kenney 2003, Gilmour 2009). Further south of the quarry a 20ha evaluation was carried out in 2009/2010 (Gilmour et al 2010) (Fig. 2).
1992 Excavations

2.5.2 In 1992 two trenches (Trenches I and II) 2m wide and 275m long were opened before Phase 1 of quarrying began (Bray 1992; 4). Archaeological remains encountered during these excavations included two parallel ditches, one of which had a series of postholes cut into its base. These ditches were initially believed to be of Bronze Age date; however, following further work in 1993, they were re-interpreted as the boundary ditches to a Roman trackway (Bray 1993). The only other archaeological feature found during this phase of work was a sub-rectangular pit measuring 4m long by 3m wide, however, the feature was not completely exposed (Bray 1992; 9). This work suggested that there was a significant quantity of Bronze Age archaeology in the vicinity to warrant further archaeological excavations.

July 1993 Excavations

2.5.3 In July 1993, Trench III, 10m wide and 272m long was opened (Bray 1993; 6). Excavated features consisted of a series of postholes, subcircular and square pits and a complex of intercutting pits. The two parallel ditches recorded in 1992 continued into this area. Three areas of Bronze Age activity were defined:

1. A series of postholes believed to represent a circular hut and a curvilinear fence lying close to the parallel Roman ditches. These were uncovered within the area of surviving buried soil (Bray 1993; 6).

2. A pit containing fired clay, animal bone and a crucible was interpreted as remains from a funerary or industrial site. This pit lay to the south of the remnants of a buried soil and the main complex of Neolithic and Bronze Age features (Bray 1993; 6).

3. A pit complex which Bray suggests may have been associated with a storage function lay at the southern end of Trench III (Bray 1993; 6).

2.5.4 The two parallel ditches continued across the area enclosed by the circular hut and were therefore presumed to be of a more recent date, possibly Roman. Two undated rectangular pits were also excavated; these were believed to have been overlain by the buried soil and were assumed to be Neolithic in date (Bray 1993; 5).

2.5.5 Apart from the crucible mentioned above, other artefacts recovered during this excavation included animal bone, pottery, flint tools, flint knapping waste and a loom weight. These artefacts are likely to indicate the presence of Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement nearby. A phosphate survey was undertaken across the buried soil that identified high concentrations of phosphates within the ancient soil; high phosphate levels are commonly indicative of domestic or agricultural waste and therefore could indicate the presence of an adjacent settlement.

2.5.6 Bray suggests that artefacts recovered during these excavations were largely retained within archaeological features, and the site, at least where it is overlain by a medieval headland, was in a relatively undisturbed condition (Bray 1994; 5). This headland not only protected archaeological deposits, but also the Bw soil horizon of a buried soil which had formed near the base of the original post-glacial soil profile (French 1993; 9). This Bw horizon is referred to as "the Bronze Age buried soil" by Bray on the presumption that it formed between the late Neolithic, which is the presumed date of the two pits which it seals, and the Bronze Age, when a number of pits were cut in to this layer (Bray 1993:4).
September 1993 Excavations

2.5.7 Trench IV, opened in September 1993, was an open area 35m wide and 280m long (Schlee 1993). This work continued the analysis of features recorded in Trench III. Three types of Bronze Age arrangements were defined in addition to the continuation of the pit complex in Trench III:

1. Six adjacent pits or postholes that lay to the south of the pit alignment were interpreted as a square structure (Schlee 1993; 2).

2. A semi-circular arrangement of pits that lay within the buried soil was suggested to be the remnants of a small roundhouse (Schlee 1993; 4).

3. Linear pit alignments within the buried soil were interpreted as a fence (Schlee 1993; 4).

2.5.8 The parallel ditches were found to contain Roman as well as Bronze Age pottery, probably indicating a historic but pre-medieval date for the excavation and infilling of these features. Rectangular pits similar to those found in Trench III, although on a different orientation, were found to contain medieval pottery.

2.5.9 Excavation of the buried soil was carried out within eighteen 1m square test pits. Bronze Age pottery was recovered from a depth of up to 0.25m within the buried soil, although the majority of the finds came from the upper 0.05m. Schlee suggests that the Bronze Age buried soil had been disturbed by a combination of bioturbation and later ploughing, and it would seem that the buried soil was preserved and largely incorporated in the headland (Schlee 1993:4). This would suggest that earlier phosphate readings may be misleading and the dating of pits to the Neolithic based on their perceived stratigraphic relationship with the ‘buried soil’ may be erroneous.

1994, 1996 and 1997 Excavations

2.5.10 Trenches V and VI were excavated in December 1994, October 1996 and May 1997. (Kemp and Kenney 2003). This lead to a re-interpretation of the ‘buried soil’ found across part of the site. It was shown that much of what had originally been referred to as the ‘buried soil’ was in fact disturbed by medieval and later ploughing and only a small area, under the Medieval headland was preserved. This area of buried soil was seen as likely to be the original post-glacial soil (Kemp and Kenney 2003; 24). In addition several prehistoric features were identified:

1. Two pits were found adjacent to each other, one contained a significant quantity of Earlier Neolithic pottery (Kemp and Kenney 2003;12).

2. Two pit complexes, of Neolithic or Bronze Age date (Kemp and Kenney 2003; 8) were thought likely to be related to other pit complexes identified in 1993, although their function remained enigmatic (Kemp and Kenney 2003, 25).

3. An irregular ring ditch was thought to be the remains of a ploughed out barrow or possibly a stock enclosure or roundhouse (Kemp and Kenney 2003; 27). Given the presence of a near complete collared urn in the base of the ditch, the former interpretation seems most plausible.

4. Four postholes forming an L shape, were interpreted as potentially the remains of a six post structure of Bronze Age date (Kemp and Kenney 2003;26)

5. A very large shallow pit was interpreted as evidence for Bronze age quarrying activity (Kemp and Kenney 2003;27).
2.5.11 In addition one of the two ditches first identified in 1992 as a possible Roman trackway was found to continue into this area (Kemp and Kenney 2003; 29).

2.5.12 Medieval activity was represented by the remains of a cultivation system; furrows and a headland. On the ridge between two of these furrows, six sub-rectangular pits were recorded. These were seen to have performed a number of functions, including acting as markers within the Medieval field system. This function was later taken on by a row of posts (Kemp and Kenney 2003; 30).

2008 Excavations

2.5.13 The 2008 excavations were located directly to the east of the 1996/97 site (Gilmour 2009). Key features and finds included:

1. Two groups of three Earlier Neolithic Pits, one group containing significantly fewer finds than the other. One pit contained over 1.5kg of Mildenhall pottery and a large assemblage of flint (Gilmour 2009; 20)

2. A short length of ditch and several small undated ditches thought to form part of a larger Bronze Age field system (Gilmour 2009; 20). A single very tightly crouched burial radiocarbon dated to 1130 – 900 BC (95% probability SUERC-21616 (GU-17876) (Gilmour 2009; 21)

3. A Later Iron Age crouch burial radiocarbon dated to 350 – 30 BC (95% probability SUERC-21615) (Gilmour 2009; 21)

4. Several ditches dated to the Later Iron Age/Early Roman date appear to be part of a wider field system of this date (Gilmour 2009; 22)

5. An unusual oval Later Iron Age – Early Roman enclosure measuring 7.5m by 5m was located on the western edge of the excavation. The function of the enclosure was uncertain as the ditch was quite substantial but it enclosed a very small area. Various interpretations from an enclosure surrounding a shepherds hut, a hayrick to a barrow/burial mound have been proposed however none of which proved satisfactory (Gilmour 2009; 22).

6. A rectangular enclosure with internal postholes also proved enigmatic. The only finds from within the feature were a single whelk shell, part of a medieval horseshoe and three tiny (less than 1g) fragments of pottery. A medieval structure sited in the middle of fields with no associated finds seams somewhat unlikely. If the horseshoe was intrusive, which could be a possibility bearing in mind the shallow nature of the surrounding ditch the remaining finds are of little help providing a date (Gilmour 2009; 22, 23).

2010 Field Walking and Evaluation – Dimmock’s Cote, Southern Extension

2.5.14 Field walking and trenching was carried out on 20ha of land to the south of Dimmock’s Cote road in December 2009 – January 2010. The evaluation identified surface scatters of earlier prehistoric flintwork and Early Iron Age pottery, an extensive area of Early Iron Age pitting cutting through a buried soil (protected by a medieval headland) and a posthole structure of uncertain date and evidence for medieval Ridge and Furrow agriculture. In more detail:

1. Pre-Iron Age activity was limited to an extensive plough-zone scatter of struck flint and a small number of residual flints. The flint assemblage was heavily recorticated and is indicative of persistent but low-intensity activity over a long period of time (Gilmour et al 2010; 20).
2. The pit group was situated along the top of a ridge and consisted of pits ranging in size from potential post settings to larger more classic Iron Age ‘storage pits’. There was however no direct evidence of the settlement focus (Gilmour et al 2010: 21).

3. A ditch which extended through the pit group was undated however it is likely that the ditch was cut later than the pits to mark the same boundary (Gilmour et al 2010: 21).

4. Twelve sherds of Early Iron Age pottery were recovered from a 1m square test pit through the buried soil which survives beneath the medieval headlands (Gilmour et al 2010: 21).

5. A single Middle Iron Age pit was recorded which is of interest as no other MIA material has been recovered from previous interventions within the quarry area. This may represent either continuous settlement or re-settlement following a hiatus (Gilmour et al 2010: 22).

6. The post built structure contained fragments of lava quern which can be found in contexts from the Late pre-Roman Iron Age - 12th/13th centuries (Gilmour et al 2010: 22).

7. The remains of three north-south headlands that cross the site are the last visible remains of the Medieval ridge and furrow field system. Remnants of furrows were also recorded on the geophysical survey and by trenching though these were slight (Gilmour et al 2010: 22).

3 Deposition Mapping

3.1 Neolithic
3.1.1 Neolithic remains have been discovered directly to the south of the development area during all phases of evaluation and excavation within the current quarry boundaries. The features generally consisted of a small number of pits containing variable quantities of Earlier Neolithic pottery and flint. Within the wider study area there are also numerous find spots of worked and burnt flint such as those discovered approximately 500m north of the site (HER 06990 and 06991).

3.2 Bronze Age
3.2.1 Extensive Bronze Age remains have been discovered within the study area which include ritual, funerary and settlement activity. A settlement area including a circular building and pit group was identified in 1993 and just two hundred metres to the south of the site was a Bronze Age barrow discovered during the the 1996/7 excavations. A Bronze Age field system typical of this period was identified in an excavation in 2008 along with a tightly crouched burial. Bronze Age finds of flint (HER 06989) and an axe (HER 06980) were also recovered beyond the quarry limits to the north and the south of the site.

3.3 Iron Age
3.3.1 A middle/late Iron Age crouched burial and an unusual rectangular enclosure were identified in the 2008 open area excavation, the latter was undated and could also be of Roman or Medieval date. Approximately 500m to the south an extensive area of early Iron Age pitting was identified running along a high ridge of land. A single middle Iron Age pit was excavated in 2009/2010 (Gilmour et al 2010)
3.4 Roman
3.4.1 The Roman evidence is slightly more sporadic than the prehistoric remains within the evaluated and excavated areas with just a few ditches and finds associated with this period. Several field ditches and an unusual oval enclosure were identified in the 2008 open area excavation immediately to the south. Directly to the west of the study area (HER 10490) is a rectilinear pattern of earthworks likely to be Roman in date and also a series of Roman features and three skeletons (HER 06973) which were uncovered during quarry works. A large scatter of Roman pottery was discovered to the west of Fodderfen Drove (HER 06982).

3.5 Medieval
3.5.1 An undated rectangular building or enclosure identified during the 2008 excavations was assigned a possible medieval date, however no further excavated remains can be assigned to this period and the feature may be considerably earlier (Gilmour 2009). The most obvious evidence for medieval activity can be observed in the pattern of deep, wide headlands that extend across the landscape into the development area. Ridge and furrow was also observed to the southern excavations.

4 Degree of Survival
4.1.1 The degree of survival of the archaeological remains is likely to be variable across the development area. The field has been heavily ploughed and therefore it is expected that the archaeological remains will be subject to considerable truncation in parts. The barrow excavated in 1996/1997 was subject to similar conditions and was clearly heavily truncated with no sign of the upstanding mound. The earthworks to the west of the site whose orientation is likely to extend into the development area become instantly invisible once inside the field boundary. This may be due to differing soil conditions affecting identification but may also be due to more intensive ploughing with in the development area.

4.1.2 Another significant factor affecting the preservation of archaeological remains is the presence of the still visible medieval headlands that extend across the site and which would have protected the archaeology below from the most serious effects of post-war deep ploughing. These could potentially have preserved both earlier land surfaces and subsurface features, as was observed in the 2009/2010 evaluation.

5 Conclusion
5.1.1 The development area lies within a rich if sparsely occupied prehistoric landscape with evidence of Neolithic and predominantly Bronze Age activity directly to the south of the site. Iron Age and Roman remains are also likely to be encountered within the area as has been discussed in 3.3 and 3.4. Medieval features beyond remains related to agriculture; ridge and furrow, field boundaries and potential agricultural structures are unlikely and no Anglo-Saxon finds are known from the area.
APPENDIX A. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Kemp, S. 2002; Archaeological Evaluation of Prehistoric archaeology at Dimmock’s Cote Wicken. Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field unit unpublished report no. A205

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Results of Survey

1. Magnetic Survey

1.1 The general level of background magnetic response is low, with many of the highlighted anomalies being comparatively weak (to help emphasise these weaker responses the results are plotted at a narrow range of -1 to 1.5 nT and -1 to 1 nT in the archive plots).

1.2 A number of anomalies have been identified as being of possible archaeological interest. In all cases the interpretation is tentative due to a combination of factors: the incoherent nature of the responses; the lack of complete and obvious archaeological patterns; the possible impact of natural factors on the results. For those anomalies designated ?Archaeology an archaeological interpretation is favoured due to the presence of known archaeology in the immediate vicinity, but alternative origins cannot be dismissed.

1.3 Anomalies [A] are suggestive of field systems and possible small enclosures. The pattern is far from complete and some of the responses are rather sinuous, which could point to a natural origin. Limestone cracking, for example, can produce responses such as this, which are similar to archaeological patterns.

1.4 Linear response [B] has the form of a weakly magnetic archaeological ditch, suggestive of a former field boundary. There are two possible alternative explanations for [B]. A ferrous response lies at its northern end and though there was no obvious surface source for this anomaly it lies at an opening in the field boundary. [B] could, represent a drain or service trench leading to a now buried manhole cover or cap. Anomaly [B] shares an alignment with several comparably strong responses [C], to the east, whose parallel nature suggests cultivation and [B] may alternatively be another magnetically enhanced cultivation trend.

1.5 Anomalies [D] lie within a zone of highly increased magnetic response. The magnitude of the anomalies is indicative of strong magnetic enhancement that could relate to intensive settlement activity and possibly some burnt or fired material. Very few coherent patterns can be discerned within the zone, but it could indicate an area where archaeological deposits have been disturbed by later agricultural activity. It should, however, be noted that strong magnetic gravels can produce anomalies of similar form and that [D] might therefore be natural in origin. Certainly, the sinuous band of marginally increased response [E] extending east of [D] has the feel of natural deposits and the two may be related.

1.6 Ditch type anomalies [F], although visually eclipsed by their stronger neighbours, may be of archaeological interest since they are relatively coherent and are on different alignments to any current or former cultivation trends. If they are archaeological, it is suggested they relate to former field systems. A similar interpretation is offered for the isolated curving anomaly [G].

1.7 Immediately adjacent to [G] there are hints of a circular trend, roughly 8m in diameter, which may be of archaeological interest. It must be stressed that this interpretation is extremely cautious, since the response lies at the limits of detectability.

1.8 Reference has already been made to possible cultivation trends [C] in the centre of the survey. Since this cultivation trend is on a different alignment to the modern ploughing (and extends over the present grassed 'runway') it has been designated as possible ridge and furrow, though it could reflect more recent activity. On a different orientation, weak parallel linears in the western half of the grid most probably reflect ridge and furrow, while a third possible ploughing alignment is suggested at the eastern end of the grid.

1.9 The survey data were collected along the line of the modern ploughing, minimising its effects on the results, except at the eastern and western field edges, where pronounced responses [H]
represent deep tractor ruts and associated soil disturbance. A faint trend [I] marks the transition from ploughed land to rough pasture at the edge of the grassed 'runway'.

1.10 A number of other short linears, trends and pit type anomalies can be seen in the data, which are categorised as **Uncertain Origin**. They are either isolated and/or form no obvious patterns that would enable a precise interpretation. Although, given the wider context, an archaeological origin for any one of these responses cannot be entirely dismissed, alternative explanations are favoured. The linear anomalies and trends could reflect agriculture, other modern human activity (e.g. drainage or landscaping), or possibly natural factors such as limestone cracking. The pit type anomalies may indicate natural pockets of magnetic soils/gravels or deeply buried ferrous debris.

1.11 Small scale ferrous anomalies ("iron spikes") are present throughout, their form best illustrated in the XY trace plots. These responses are characteristic of small pieces of ferrous debris in the topsoil and are commonly assigned a modern origin. Only the most prominent of these are highlighted on the interpretation diagram. Ferrous disturbance at the grid edges has been produced by wire fencing and other material in the adjacent boundaries.
Figure 1: Location of the development area (red)
Figure 2: HER results
Figure 3: Aerial Photo Interpretation (Aerial Photo Services 2002)

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Figure 4: Archaeological features and interventions to the south of the development area.