

A Report made to Ailsworth and Castor  
Village Planning Group on the  
Distribution and Significance of  
Archaeological Sites Around and to the  
North of the Two Villages

By

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## Introduction

This report is the result of a request from Ailsworth and Castor Village Planning Group (ACVPG) for a comprehensive comment on the numbers and significance of archaeological sites in and around the two villages of Ailsworth and Castor.

The two parishes lie to the north of the River Nene on well drained soils which, where they front the river, are on alluvial and first river terrace gravels. The villages are both sited on the slight remains of a river terrace boundary formed by Lower Lincolnshire Limestone and Upper Estuarine Series deposits which are backed to the north by Blisworth Clay and further north still by Cornbrash. Such geological deposits provided a largely well drained and fertile set of soils for the early occupation of the area (Geological Survey 1955. 'Peterborough').

There are traces of Mesolithic occupation that have been recorded from just outside the area of interest contained within this report but Neolithic occupation is attested by excavation within the study area to the west of Ailsworth, at one of the so called 'Roman camps' (RCHM, plate 3, Fig 14 , p 34-5), actually in Upton parish (NVAT reports). From this early time the landscape has been continually occupied and settled. Throughout the Bronze Age, fields have been laid out and are traceable on air photographs and there are considerable numbers of 'ring ditches', which are the ploughed out remains of burial mounds. These are found in many parts of the surrounding parish areas. One such burial mound still survives as an earthwork feature (over 1m high) to the south of the former Castor Station (RCHM, 1969. p17). Air photographs of the area, which have been taken over the last 60 years, also show intensive Iron Age occupation with farmsteads, trackways and pit alignments being numerous. Some of these important and complex sites are within the area of concern of this report and are of considerable interest and may have social, political and economic links with the nationally important late Iron Age complex at Lynch Farm on the other side of the river Nene (Upex 2016).

It is during the Roman period that the area takes on a new and important significance and this narrative of Roman occupation in the area has been documented in various earlier publications (Camden, 1607; Stukeley 1885; VCH, 1902; RCHM 1969; Camus project 2004; Upex 2008 & 2011). Such publications show the long development of the landscape around the two villages and highlight the local regional and national significance of some of the sites and monuments which are to be found in the immediate vicinity. Chief among these sites is the so called *Praetorium* underneath parts of Castor church and the surrounding village area. This structure, which was first explored in detail by Edmund Artis (Artis 1828), is of considerable national significance as a major Roman public building which may have had connections with the organisation of the fenland from the late first century onwards (Upex 2011).

The area of Normangate Field to the south of both Ailsworth and Castor is an area of intense suburban Roman occupation linked to the Roman town of *Durobrivae* (Upex 2008, Chap III). The Normangate Field area is known from excavation (Dannell 1974) but more extensively from a series of air photographs taken by various researchers which have allowed detailed plots to be made of the Roman features. The area gave its name to the production of pottery and Castor Ware, or Nene Valley Ware, was exported during the Roman period over considerable parts of central and southern Britain. Roman iron working was also important within the immediate area of Normangate Field and fabricated iron products must have provided a significant aspect of the wealth of the local economy. Around this economic

centre, which expanded under Hadrian in the early second century and lasted until the end of Roman rule, were a series of major and opulent villas. Villas are to be found at Mill Hill to the south east of the village of Castor and at two locations to the south west in Ailsworth parish (RCHM. Figs 5-6 & 11).

In the aftermath of the Roman retreat the site now under Castor church appears to have been the focus for the setting up of a nunnery founded by Kyneburgha in the mid. 7<sup>th</sup> century. This foundation is poorly documented but finds from within the area of the church do point to significant archaeological occupation during this period and make the site of national importance (Camus Project 2004; Dallas, 1973; Green *et.al.* 1987; Wood 2004; Upex 2011). Further Saxon occupation is also attested by the finding of a Saxon hanging bowl during work linked with the Castor bypass and this may be connected with an extensive area of Saxon surface material found by David Hall during field walking surveys in the late 1970s (Hall and Martin 1980).

The expansion of Ailsworth and Castor during the post Saxon and medieval period are inextricably linked. Ailsworth became a dependant settlement but was linked to the church at Castor. A manorial site to the south of the former A47 road was also created during the early medieval period (RCHM Fig 12). Remnants of the former open fields of both parishes are found on air photographs (RCHM p.18) and on early maps of the parishes (NRO Map T236 dated 1846). There are some elements of ridge and furrow that still survive near the manor site and as small discreet areas near the railway line to the south of both villages. Earthworks of former open field headland turning areas within the open fields remain as major, linear, landscape features in many parts of the two parishes and in some cases their linear, elevated, lines have been mistaken for Roman roads.

## **Archives and Repositories Consulted in the Formulation for this Report.**

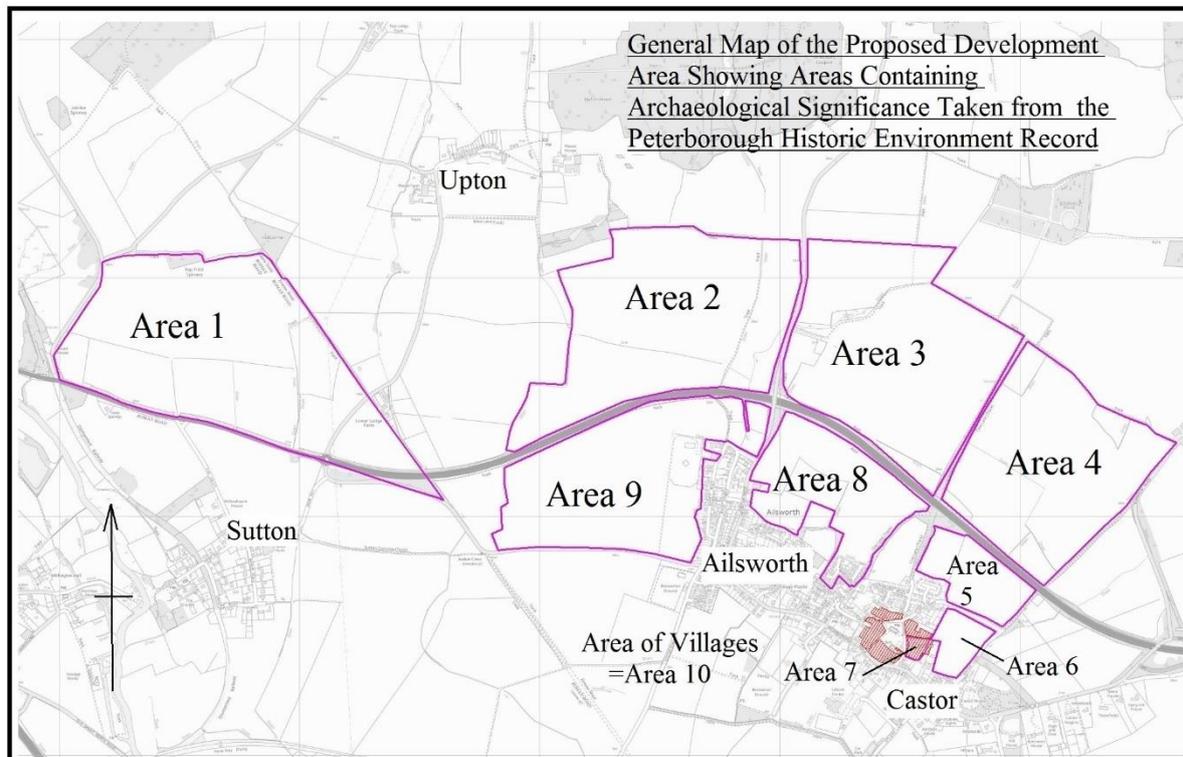
Chief amongst the public archives consulted during the research and writing of this report are the documents, air photographs and reports held by Peterborough City Council Planning Department as part of their maintained Historic Environment Record (HER). In addition the records accumulated by the Nene Valley Research Committee (NVAC) and Nene Valley Archaeological Trust (NVAT) provided both cartographic and photographic images of sites from the ground, taken during excavation, and from the air. Air photographs held by the National Monuments Archive, Northamptonshire County Council Planning Office, Cambridge University Air Photographic Committee (CUAPC) and the Ailsworth and Castor Village Planning Group were all consulted. Cartographical detail was provided by early maps housed in the Northamptonshire Record Office (NRO), Huntingdon Record Office (HRO) and the University of Cambridge Library (UCL).

A bibliography of published works cited is given at the end of this report.

## **The Layout and Areas under Discussion.**

The layout of this report considers various areas of landscape within the two parishes of Ailsworth and Castor. These areas were decided on by the way the presentation of HER material was made from the Peterborough Planning Office and they are shown in Figure 1, below. For each area a search was made of the sites and finds listed within the HER and these sites are presented in map form along with a list of the data related to the find site. Some of these numbered sites can represent single finds of a coin or a pottery fragment, in other

instances they can represent excavation data or information recovered from field walking or other observations. In addition to this HER detail, for each area a search was made for air photographic (AP) evidence and this was plotted separately. In some cases the HER detail and the AP details overlap- where perhaps the HER has listed a site only known from air photographs. In other instances the HER refers to sites shown on APs where these APs haven't been consulted.



*Figure 1. The named areas of landscape considered within this report*

**Area 1** The area to the west of Ermine Street and north of the A47 –see Figure 1

**Area 1 (HER- 6 sites)**

No	HER No.	Parish	Form	Material	Description	Ref	Grid Ref:-	Date
1	10044	Sutton	AP		<b>Field System</b> Possible field traces plus pit row. (R Palmer 28/06/1990).	1. National Monument Records Aerial Photographs 2466/7; TL0999/8; 2. Northamptonshire County Council APs, 23/06/1984	TL093299	Medieval
2	00227	Upton	AP		<b>Linear feature (uncertain) Ring ditch</b> Linear feature (uncertain) Ring ditch about 60 feet in diameter, 80 yards N of Sutton Toll, on gravel at about 70 feet OD. Visible on CUCAP APs.R1, Ring ditch, linear ditch. (R. Desmond 13/06/1985);	1. CUCAP APs, 26/06/1959 ZB 39 2. RCHM Peterborough New Town, 1969, 34; 2, CUCAP	0911/9961	B/A
3	00230	Sutton	Obs		<b>Post hole?</b>	Nene Valley Research	0926/9955	?

					Contractor's slip trench produced an undated post hole.	Committee Annual Report, 1979 - 1980		
4	05665	Sutton	AP		<b>Enclosure</b> Part of N and W sides of rectangular enclosure?	SG Upex APs, 1977- Nene Valley Research Committee	0991/9965	I/A?
5	08468	Sutton	Exc		During construction of the Castor / Ailsworth bypass, 3 boreholes were of potential archaeological interest. A detailed borehole report is awaited from Leonard Threadgold, the contractor. Borehole 1 was close to Ermine Street.	NVAT (note)	1051/9918	?
6	08472	Sutton	Exc		Excavation of trial pits during construction of Castor / Ailsworth bypass. 10 pits and surrounding area were of potential archaeological interest. The finds have yet to be processed. Trial pit 3 was next to the Roman road joining Ermine Street at TL/1060/9907 (uncertain what was found in these pits? SGU)	NVRC (note)	10400/99158	?

Table 1. HER list with details

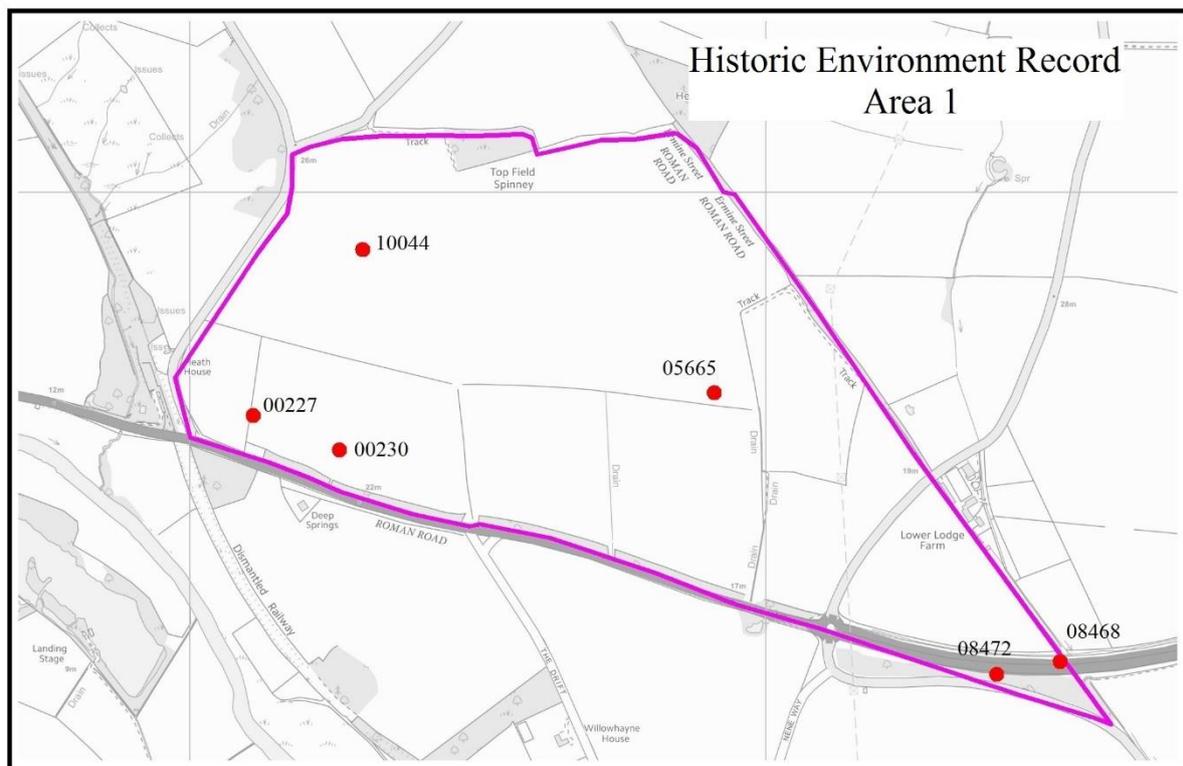


Figure 2. Area 1 showing HER plots which link with Table 1 (above)

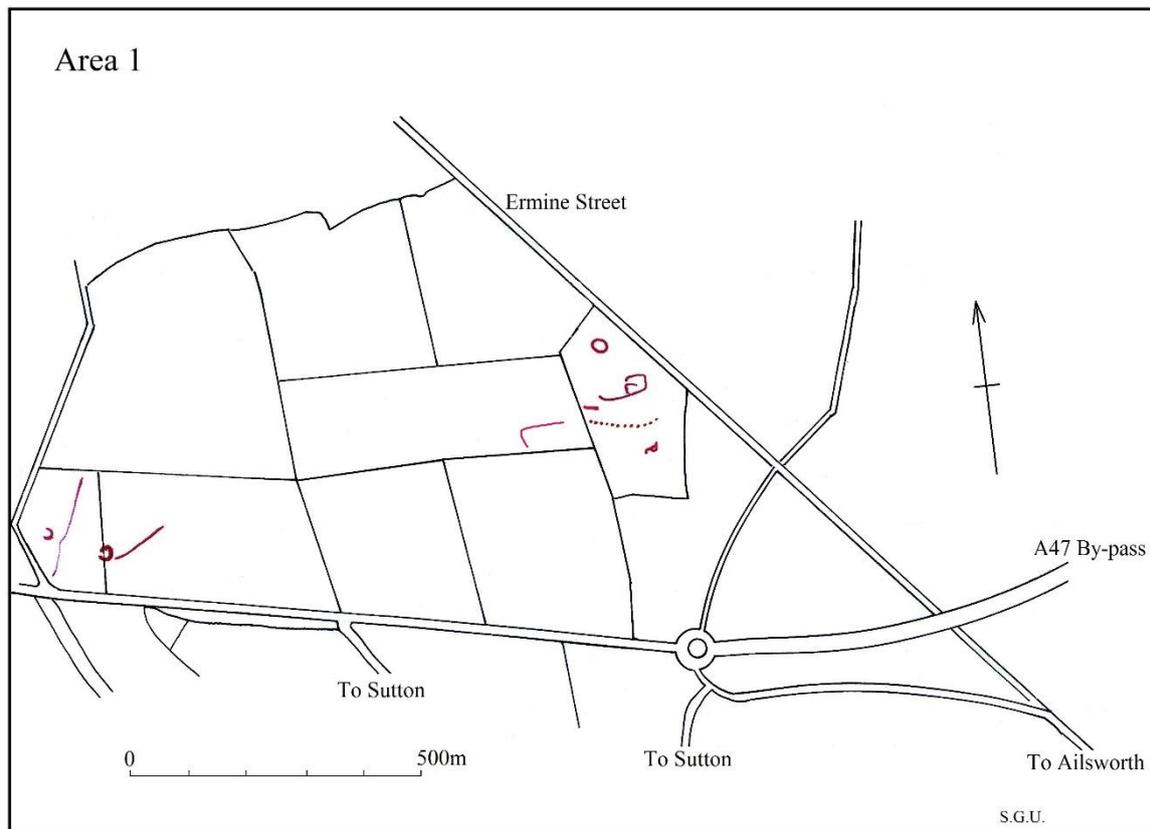


Figure 3. A plot (red) of all air photographed crop marks in Area 1

**Comment**

HER number 05665 describes part of an enclosure which, on subsequent APs, seems to be part of a much larger settlement including a ring ditch (B/A?) and another small enclosure and a pit alignment.

HER number 00227 also seems to be associated with another (second) ring ditch and another liner feature.

There is a general ‘noise’ of finds from the area without significant evidence for large scale archaeological occupation. The three (?) ring ditches are probably of B/A date and associated with the large number of such features to the south of the A47 road line, known from the parish of Sutton (RCHM p 34).

**Area 2 -** The area to the north of the present by-pass and west of the line of the road to Helpston – see Figure 1

Area 2 (HER-12 sites)

No	HER No.	Parish	Form	Material	Description	Ref	Grid Ref:-	Date
7	0214 6	Ailsworth	Fieldwork Survey	slag heap, findspot	<b>Iron smelting areas.</b> Black slag deposits. Also TF/120/000, TF/120/002.	D.N. Hall	TF/117-/001-	Med?
8	0215 5	Ailsworth	aerial photograph, cropmark, excavation		<b>Ditch, enclosure, ring ditch.</b> Sub-rectangular enclosures each about 1 acre, the N one partly outside the Designated Area, are linked by a length of ditch. Each has a circular ditched feature	1. Peterborough New Town Arch Survey, 40,1967 (RCHM) 2. RCHM Peterborough New Town, 1969, 17, (10), (plan) 3. Nene Valley Research Committee	TF/1199/0002, TF/1215/0015	I/A

					within. O1, There are no visible remains at this site. R3, Two excavations were undertaken here. The site showed on APs as an enclosure containing a well-defined ring ditch, attached to a long ditch running from a crop mark complex just outside the boundary of the Designated Area. S2. The stripping of the site showed that, apart from the long ditch and the ring ditch, the other crop marks were only a soil effect and that the ring ditch, and many hearths, belonged to an Italian Prisoner of War Camp occupied c 1943 - 1948. See RN 04593 - crop mark site nearby and full list of APs 04576, RN50683 for pipeline.	(notes) 4. Monument Number 350363, Pastscap [Online]. Available at: <a href="http://www.pastscap.e.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=350375">http://www.pastscap.e.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=350375</a>		
9	04576	Ailsworth	AP		<b>Ditch, enclosure, pit alignment, ring ditch</b> Enclosures, ring ditch and pit alignment. (A Spedding 1984, CUCAP AP RC8-T 9 used). O1, TF/1185/0024 - TF1180/0000. A linear ditch some 170yds long with a gap in it 100yds from its S edge. To the N it continues as a pit alignment. There are no visible remains at this site.	1 CUCAP, 08/07/1959 ZZ 22 - 23, 30/06/1970RC8-T 9, 07/05/1974 RC8-AO 21 - 22, 21/05/1976 RC8-BJ 52, 09/07/1962AFZ 37, 30/06/1970 BCS 54 - 55, 30/06/1970 RC8-T 16 - 17 2. RCHM Peterborough New Town, 1967, 17 (ill) 3. Nene Valley Research Committee SMR 2165	TF/116- /002-	I/A
10	04593	Ailsworth	AP		<b>Enclosure, linear feature, ring ditch</b> . A variety of enclosures, ring ditch and linear features. (A Spedding 22/02/1984, CUCAP APs ZB 73, BCE 19, ABD 33used). R2, Modification to CUCAP plotted angled ditch. Sketched at 1:10000. (R Palmer 23/09/1990). See RN 04576 - crop mark near by 02155 - excavation, RN50683 for pipeline watching brief.	1.CUCAP APs, 26/06/1959 ZB 73 - 76,04/07/1959 ZP 25, 15/06/1960 ABD 32, 33, 09/07/1962 AFZ 37,22/06/1970 BCE 19, 30/06/1970 BCS 54, 55, 22/06/1970 BCE 19,30/06/1970 RC8-T 16, 17, 03/05/1972 BIE 70 - 73,14/06/1972 RC8-AC 217, 222, 223, 07/05/1974 RC8-AO 121, 122,21/05/1976 RC8-BJ 52, 57, 58, 01/06/1981 RC8-DT 121;2, 2. NMR APs, TF1200/25 - 29; 3. Northamptonshire County Council APs, 01/07/1984, NMR ref 2493/9 - 13, 23/06/1984, NMR ref 2466/12, 13;	TF/120- /001-, TF/122- /003-	I/A
11	50367	Ailsworth	AP		<b>Ring ditch</b> 20m in diameter.	1. Nene Valley Research Committee SMR 0871 2. CUCAP- St Joseph 30/06/1970 BCS 56	TL/1160/ 9990	B/A
12	50368	Ailsworth	AP		<b>Possible track way.</b> A vaguely north-south	1. Nene Valley Research Committee	TL/1170/ 9980	Uncertain?

					aligned long ditch runs from the given grid reference to TL/1162/9953. It is crossed at north end by a track way widening to the east and running from TL/1165/9987 to TL/1184/9977. Another ditch to the east leaves the entrance at TL/1169/9961. This may be a medieval field boundary seen on recent Aps (SGU 2016) – see 1846 Open Field map of Castor and Ailsworth	SMR 0864		
13	50665	Ailsworth	Fieldwalk survey		<b>Architectural fragment, quarry, ridge and furrow</b> Ridge and furrow was identified. Furrow width 2m, width between furrows 10m, orientation: N-S, regularity or position of furrow: non-continuous. See Peterborough HER-50663-50664, 50666-50690 and 51487 for further archaeological work.	1. Transco Gas Pipeline, Site 3, Section 4, Plot 23 2. Network Archaeology, April 1999 'Peterborough to Lutton 1050mm Gas Pipeline. Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Watching Brief 1998', Volume 1: Report & Volume 2 Appendices', Network Archaeology Ltd' Report no. 135'	TL/1196/9983	Med
14	50666	Ailsworth	Fieldwalk survey		<b>Plough headland</b> This site comprised a low, narrow linear earthwork, running north to south for a distance of 200m. Width was approximately 8m, and survived to a height of 0.30m. See Peterborough HER 50663-50665, 50667-50690 and 51487 for further archaeological work.	1. Transco Gas Pipeline, Site 4, Section 4, Plot 24-25 2. Network Archaeology, April 1999 'Peterborough to Lutton 1050mm Gas Pipeline. Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Watching Brief 1998', Volume 1: Report & Volume 2 Appendices', Network Archaeology Ltd' Report no. 135'	TL/1166/9966	Med
15	50684	Ailsworth	Watching Brief/Exc	Charcoal/pottery	<b>Charcoal, ditch, pot, ridge and furrow</b> A ditch was detected during a watching brief on a pipeline trench. The ditch was 7.5m wide and 1.30m deep. Its profile was asymmetrical: the north-east side was vertical, whilst at the south-west, it sloped up fairly gently. Its base was flat, and 4.4m wide. The ditch had been recut at least four times and one infill layer contained fragments of charcoal. One small sherd of pottery was recovered but too abraded to be able to date. The ditch is likely to represent a former territorial division, either an early parish boundary, a medieval or early post-medieval estate boundary, or even an Anglo-Saxon	1. Transco Gas Pipeline, Site 30, Section 4, Plot 23 2. Network Archaeology, April 1999 'Peterborough to Lutton 1050mm Gas Pipeline. Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Watching Brief 1998', Volume 1: Report & Volume 2 Appendices', Network Archaeology Ltd' Report no. 135	TL/1200/9984	Early Medieval, Medieval, Post Medieval

					land division. Ridge and furrow was also identified, Furrow width: 2m, width between furrows: 10m, orientation: N-S, regularity or position of furrow: non-continuous. See Peterborough HER 50663-50683, 50685-50690 and 51487 for further archaeological work.			
16	5068 5	Ailsworth			<b>Pits</b> Two pits, approximately 2.70m apart, were identified in the western section of a pipeline trench during a watching brief. Both pits had moderately steep sides, although the profiles of the bases differed, one had a narrow, 'V-shaped' base whilst the other was a concave 'U-shaped' base. No artefacts were recovered and no dates were obtainable for the pits. See Peterborough HER 50663-50684, 50686-50690 and 51487 for further archaeological work.	1. Transco Gas Pipeline, Site 31, Section 4, Plot 24 2. Network Archaeology, April 1999 'Peterborough to Luton 1050mm Gas Pipeline. Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Watching Brief 1998', Volume 1: Report & Volume 2 Appendices', Network Archaeology Ltd Report no. 135 3. CUCAP; S2, OS; S3. Monument Number 364317, Pastscape [Online]. Available at: <a href="http://www.pastscap.e.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=364317">http://www.pastscap.e.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=364317</a>	TL/1174/ 9970	Uncertain?
17	0910 3	Ailsworth	AP		<b>Enclosure</b> Enclosure system and ditches. (R Palmer 03/08/1983 CUCAP APs AFZ 35, 36 used). Crop marks; rectangular enclosure, probably RB. O2, This site falls on arable land and is at present under crop. No finds have been reported. Additional ditches sketched at 1:10000 on CUCAP base. (R Palmer 28/06/1990). See RN 09102 - crop marks nearby.	1. CUCAP APs 29/06/1952 HZ 48, 09/07/1962AFZ 35, 36; 2. NMR APs, TL199/10; 3. Northamptonshire County Council APs, 01/07/1984, NMR ref 2493/19;	TL/1101/ 9941	Roman
18	0910 4	Ailsworth	AP		<b>Ditch, enclosure</b> Crop marks of possible Romano-British enclosures: (a) TL/111-995- An extremely complicated assemblage covering about 10 acres, without coherent plan, and not entirely clear on air photographs. Possibly a settlement site. (b) TL/1130/9959 An almost square enclosure, covering just under 1 acre, with the east and west sides slightly convex. No entrances or internal features visible. (c) TL/1154/9951 A sub-rectangular enclosure covering about 1/4 acre with a large gap in north-west corner. No interior	1. CUCAP; S2. Monument Number 364320, pastscape [Online]. Available at: <a href="http://www.pastscap.e.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=364320">http://www.pastscap.e.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=364320</a> 2. R Palmer 03/08/1983 3. CUCAP AP HZ	TL/113- 995	Roman

				features. Enclosures etc, typical of the Durobrivae district. The marks fall on arable land at present under crop. No finds have been reported. Palmer reports rectilinear enclosures and ditches (R Palmer 03/08/1983 CUCAP AP HZ 48 used).			
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Table 2 HER lists with details

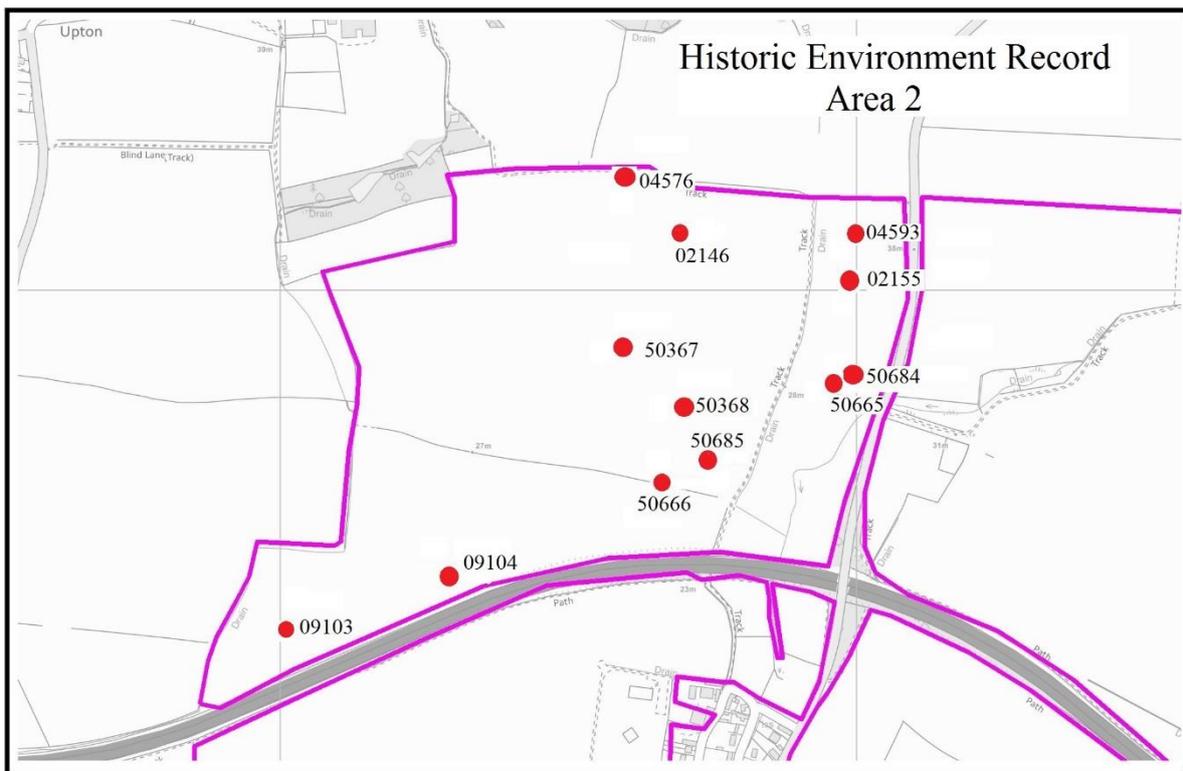


Figure 4. Area 2 showing HER plots which link with Table 2 (above).

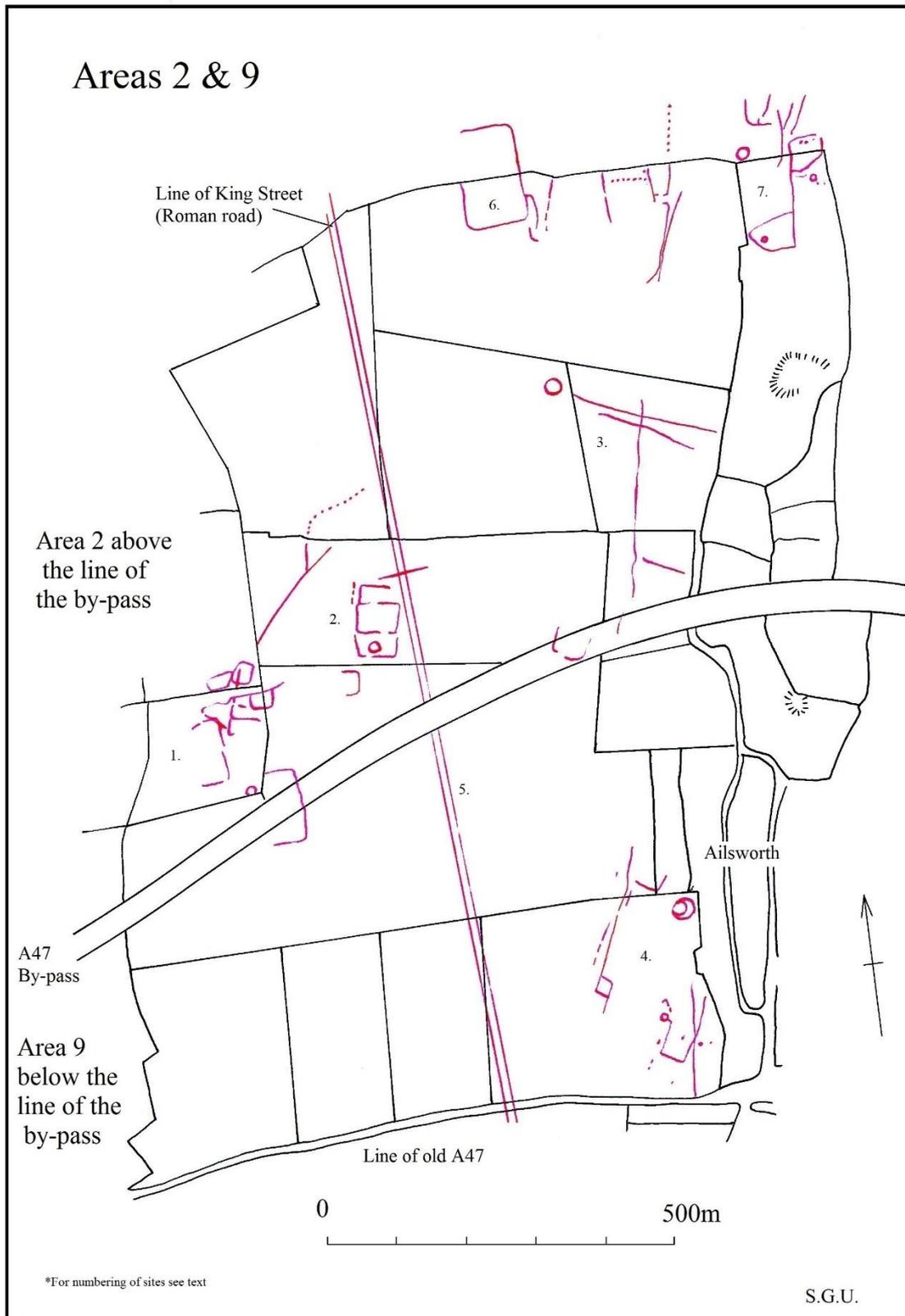


Figure 5. A plot (red) of all air photographed crop marks for Areas 2 & 9

## Comment

There are 6 major concentrations of crop marked features within Area 2, including the line of King Street numbered 5 in Figure 5. Some of these crop marks equate to the HER numbering system, so for example HER 09103 describes the complex crop marks shown in Figure 5, and numbered 1. Similarly HER 09104 covers the crop marks shown in Figure 5 as 2.

There clearly are a number of ring ditches of probable B/A date and they are likely to represent ploughed out burial mounds, although the rings shown associated with sites 2 & 7 (fig 5) may be hut circles.

The linear features associated with crop marked site 3 are difficult to interpret and may be early landscape features (field system boundaries), equally they may be headland ploughing banks associated with the open fields of the parish.

What can be said with some conviction is that the sites shown in Figure 5 and marked as 1, 2, 6 & 7 are all complex sites which are likely to be multi-period and as such would be deemed archaeologically significant should any change to the land use be envisaged. If such changes involved the destruction of these sites then large scale, open area excavation could be envisaged.

## Area 3 – The area to the north of Ailsworth and Castor between The Drift and the Helpston Road (see Figure 1)

### Area 3 (HER- 10 sites )

No	HER No.	Parish	Form	Material	Description	Ref	Grid Ref:-	Date
19	10076	Castor	AP		<b>Field system</b> Frost cracking but overlying these features the suggestion of a BA field system orientated nnw-sse	1.NMR APs, TL1299/1/115 - 120; 2. APs -SGU held in HER	TL/128- /994-	BA
20	01890	Castor	casual observation, find	pottery	<b>IA pottery</b> occurs in quantity at TL/129- /997- just W of a crop mark (TL 19 NW 45). "A substantial early IA pot scatter W of published end plan." See also RN 01890a - coin.	1.CBA Gp 9 NL 7 1977 26 (D N Hall, P W Martin, et al) (1 OS) and pers. com. 2, CDA 21/08/1979, (R1, OS);	TL/129- /997-	Iron Age
21	01894	Castor	AP		<b>Pit alignment</b>	1.Linear feature (R Palmer 05/08/1983 CUCAP AP AFZ 39used) See RN 09111 for adjacent crop marks. 2. CUCAP APs 09/07/1962 AFZ 39, 12/08/1975BVT 90;	TL/129- /998	Iron Age
22	50681	Castor	Watching Brief	charcoal	<b>Pits, postholes</b> This site consisted of three postholes and two pits. The three postholes (No: 302, 305, 311) are similar in size, profile and fill. Average diameter was 0.45m and depth was just under 0.25m. Postholes 302 and 305 were approximately	1.Transco Gas Pipeline, Site 27, Section 3, Plot 19 2. Network Archaeology, April 1999 'Peterborough to Luton 1050mm Gas Pipeline. Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Watching Brief 1998',	TF/1258/00 09	Iron Age

					1.54m apart and postholes 302 and 305 were 2.03m apart. It is thought that the postholes represent a "two-post structure", with two phases of use centred around posthole 302. Two pits were found slightly south of the postholes, both oval in shape with fairly steep sides, the largest was only 1.25m wide. One pit contained a high percentage of charcoal infill but there was no evidence of in situ burning, so it was suggested that the burnt material was transported and dumped here from a nearby hearth or oven. The other pit contained no artefacts. The character of this site and its similarity to site 29, makes it quite likely that they date from the Late Iron Age or early Roman periods. See PHER REC 50663-50680, 50682-50690 and 51487 for further archaeological work.	Volume 1: Report & Volume 2 Appendices', Network Archaeology Ltd Report no. 135		
23	50682	Ailsworth	Watching Brief		<b>Posthole</b> This site consisted of an isolated posthole, of which only the base remained. The posthole was fairly steep sided with a flat base measuring 0.59m in diameter and surviving to a depth of 0.13m. No dateable material was recovered but it is believed to be associated with site 29. See Peterborough HER REC 50663-50681, 50683-50690 and 51487 for further archaeological work.	1. Transco Gas Pipeline, Site 28, Section 3, Plot 1 2. Network Archaeology, April 1999 'Peterborough to Luton 1050mm Gas Pipeline. Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Watching Brief 1998', Volume 1: Report & Volume 2 Appendices', Network Archaeology Ltd Report no. 135	TF/1264/0010	Iron Age, Roma
24	50683	Ailsworth	Excavation	Pottery/ charcoal animal bone	"This site consisted of two 'occupation' layers and two pits (366 and 372). The layers were situated either side of pit 366, they consisted of thin lenses of dirty grey-brown silty clay, containing occasional pottery sherds and charcoal fragments. Pit 366 was steep sided with a wide flat base, depth: 0.15m, width: 0.6m. It was filled with a charcoal rich, loose dark grey silt containing a considerable amount of pottery, animal bone	1. Network Archaeology, "Peterborough to Luton 1050mm Gas Pipeline, Vol. 1 & 2," April 1999, Rep No. 135."	TF/126/001	I/A

					<p>and burnt stones, all of which are presumed to have been deliberately dumped. Pit 372 covered an area of at least 8.4m by 5m, and possessed a very shallow, flat based profile, 0.35m deep. It was filled with alternating bands of greasy, darkish grey sandy silt and limestone rubble. It again seems highly likely that this material was deliberately dumped. Twenty-eight sherds of Mid to Late Iron Age pottery were recovered from the site including four larger sherds from the rim of the same vessel, that of a barrel-shaped, handmade cooking pot, decorated with diagonal scoring and with a burnt interior. One piece of pottery recovered is Roman in date, indicating continuity of the site into this period. The animal bones recovered from the site are a mix of cattle, sheep and pig. Some have butchery marks, whilst many other fragments were burnt. The evidence from the site indicates that a settlement existed on one side or other of the pipeline easement, and that the occupants were using this spot to dispose of their domestic waste. Extensive crop mark complexes are recorded very close to the easement: less than 50m to the south, undated enclosures, and 300m to the west, an undated complex. The pottery from this site could mean that these sites can now be tentatively placed into a Mid to Late Iron Age/Early Roman context. See also RN04593 and RN09205 for complexes. See PHER REC 50663-50682, 50684-50690 and 51487 for further archaeological work.</p>			
25	09112	Castor			<b>Enclosure, ring ditch</b>	1. Enclosure (R Palmer 05/08/1983 CUCAP AP BVT 90 used) R2, TL/128-	TL/128- /997-	B/A & IA

						/997-. Modifications and additions to CUCAP plotted enclosure plus a possible ring ditch - not circular - at TL/1285/9980. Sketched on a CUCAP base. (R Palmer 02/07/1990). 2. NMR Aps-SGU held in HER		
26	09205	Ailsworth			<b>Ditch, pit alignments, ring ditch, track way</b> 2 pit alignments intersect, ring ditch, and parallel ditches, possible track. (R Desmond 15/03/1989) R2, TL/123-/997-. Geological features. No evidence of pit rows plotted from CUCAP APs. Nothing added or changed at 1:10000. (R Palmer 02/07/1990). See also RN50683 for pipeline.	1. CUCAP APs, 30/06/1970 RC8 T 17;2, NMR APs, TL1299/1/115 - 120;	TL/124-/999-	B/A & IA
27	09816	Castor	Fieldwalking Survey	stone	Boundary marker Stone sited at the end of a balk between two furlongs.	1. NRO, Map 1093 (Sketch map of part of open field);	TL/128-/996-	Post medie val
28	09818	Ailsworth	Fieldwalking Survey	Slag	Metal working area	1.Fenland Survey, DN Hall;	TL/126-/995	Medie val

Table 3 HER list with details

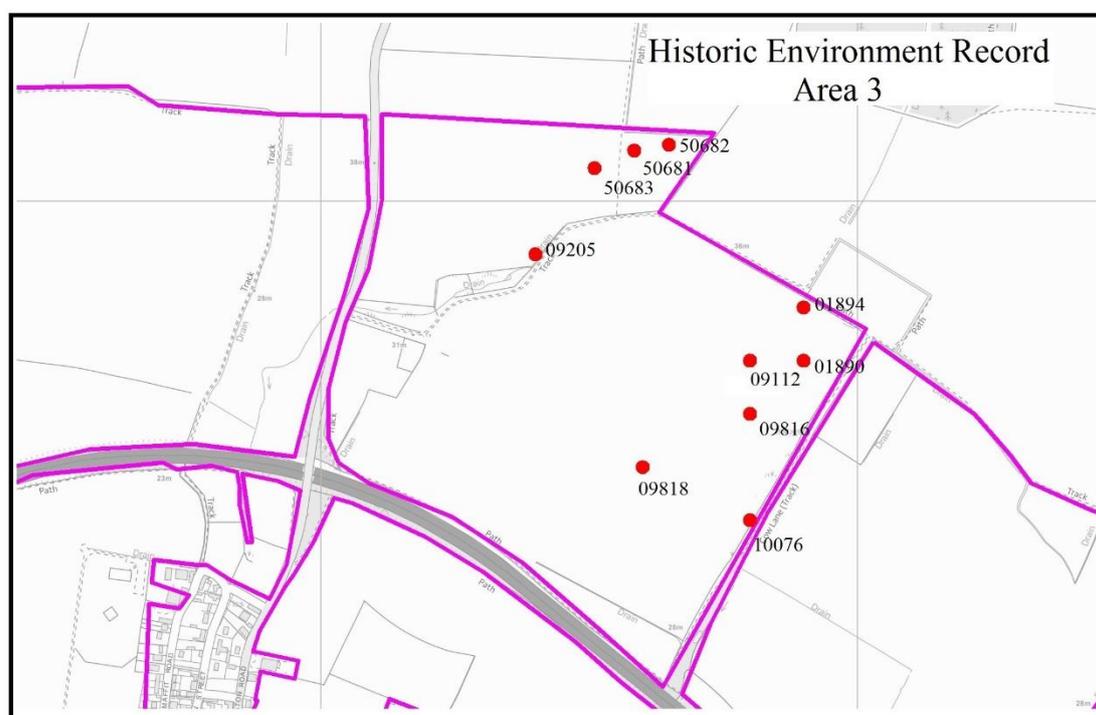


Figure 6. Area 3 showing HER plots which link with Table 3 (above).

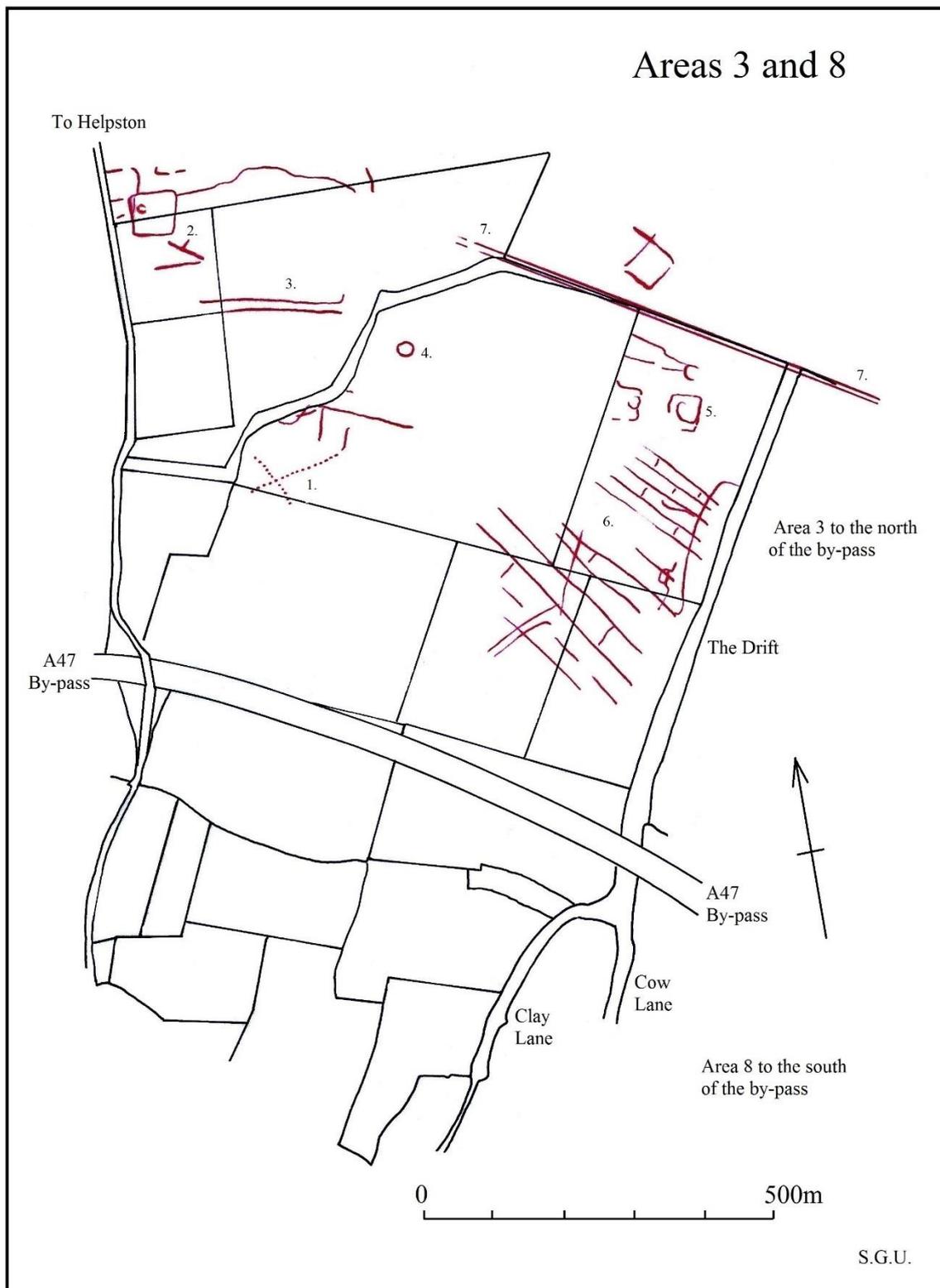


Figure 7. A plot (red) of all air photographed crop marks for Areas 3 & 8

Comment

There are two major crop marked concentrations within area 3, those marked in Figure 7 as 2 and 5. Both of these complex crop marked areas appear to be multi-period. The site numbered 2 shows very clearly as a wide, ditched enclosure (see Fig. 8), with a well-defined hut circle within the main enclosure circuit and is of probable Iron Age date. On APs there is a smaller enclosure to the north of this main enclosure, which may be earlier- this is not shown fully in Figure 7.



*Figure 8. Air photograph showing site 2 (see fig 7) from the north, with the probable Iron Age enclosure (and slight evidence for an internal hut circle) next to a possible earlier (B/A) enclosure. (photo copyright :- Ailsworth and Castor Village planning group)*

Site 5, shown in Figure 7, consists of a series of three(?) enclosures which may be late B/A or Iron Age and which link with the HER numbers sites 09112 & 01890, the latter of which is recorded as producing I/A pottery. HER site 01894, is listed as a pit alignment (I/A) but is not shown in Figure 7, as this series of photographs was not seen during the research for this report.



*Figure 9. Air photograph of site 5 looking from the north. Below the hedge line is a patch mark of the Roman road and to the upper right the slight outlines of potential B/A fields.  
(Copyright SGU and the NVRC)*

The remaining crop marked features are all confined to more discrete areas. Number 1 is a curious set of two pit alignments, which cross one another and may be associated with crop marks to the north which are masked by the trackway which cuts over these features and hides their true extent and identity. Number 3 is a parallel ditch line or trackway which may be ancient or may be part of the open field layout of the parish. Site 4 is a single ring ditch of probable B/A date and site 7 is the line of the Roman road, which is seen in Figure 9.

The area marked as site 6 is an area of extensive geological and frost cracked crop markings that also show what appear to be the general trend of a Bronze Age field layout of co-axial form (Figure 10). Such fields are known locally from Fengate and more widely within southern England and their apparent survival here is a significant contribution to our understanding of early farming regimes.



Figure 10. Site 6 (Fig 7) which shows extensive geological markings with superimposed a field system layout of possible Bronze Age date.  
(Copyright SGU and the NVRC)

**Area 4** -The Area to the north of Castor between the Drift and the road to Marholm  
(see Figure 1)

Area 4 HER (6 sites)

No	HER no.	Parish	Form	Material	Description	Ref:-	Grid Ref:-	Date
29	01331	Castor	Field walking survey,	slag	<b>Slag heap</b> findspot	1. DN Hall (Peterborough Survey)	TL/134- /992-	Medie val
30	10077	Castor			<b>Ring ditch</b>	1. Ring ditch among geological marks. (R Palmer 02/07/1990). 2. NMR APs, TL1398/9/400, 401 3. SGU APs NVAT	TL/1326/ 9906	B/A
31	01796	Castor	Field walking survey,	slag	<b>Slag heap</b> findspot	1. DN Hall (Peterborough Survey)	TL/132- /989-	Medie val
32	09116	Castor	AP		<b>Ditch, enclosure, road, settlement</b> Settlement immediately S of Roman road outside scheduled area, covers 1 1/2 acres. At least 4 irregular ditched enclosures on both sides of the linear ditch. R2, Parallel ditches, ring ditches, crop marks of very small rectilinear features, lots of geological noise. (R Palmer 07/08/1983 CUCAP APs AF 39, AZA 35, and BCS 7 used). R3, Settlement (TL/1312/9960) immediately S of Roman Road and of Designated Area boundary, covers 1 1/2 acres	1. O G S Crawford, Antiquity 4, 1930, 274,275 2. CUCAP APs 26/06/1959 ZB 65, 66, 70, 09/07/1962 AFZ 39,22/07/1969 AZA 29, 32 - 35, 22/06/1970 BCE 14, 30/06/1970 BCS 7,12/08/1975 BVT 89 3RCHM Peterborough New Town, 1969, 50, fig 8;4, NMR APs, TL1299/1/115 - 120, TL1399/1/402 - 405,TL1399/27/168 - 173	TL/132- /995-	Iron Age / Roma n

					and consists of at least four ditched enclosures both sides of a linear ditch. Settlement (TL/1350/9933) 500 yds ESE of the above site and immediately S of Roman Road covers about 2 acres and consists of at least three ditched enclosures on the N side of a sinuous length of ditch running in a general NW to SE direction. The N enclosure crosses the line of the Roman Road, but there is no indication on the ground of the relationship. In the NE corner of the largest enclosure is a circular feature with 'antennae'-like ditches curving from it. Some 100 yds SE and S of the linear ditch is an isolated rectangular ditched enclosure of 1/2 acre orientated NW to SE with an entrance on the NE side. O2, The fields containing these marks are under crops and a thorough perambulation was not possible. Slight undulations are evident and the 'linear ditch' is a low bank. R4, a) TL/131-996-. Additions to CUCAP plotted material. Sketched on CUCAP base. NMR APs TL1299/1/115 - 120 refer. (R Palmer 02/07/1990). b) TL/132-/994-. Much plotted from CUCAP material in the area of TL/1323/9946 is geological and should be deleted after further examination of all APs. Indicated at 1:10000. NMR APs TL1399/1/402 - 405, TL1399/27/168 - 173 refer. (R Palmer 02/07/1990). See RN 04573 - crop marks nearby, also 09117, 09118 and 09119.	4. NVAT SGU APs in HER		
33	09116a	Castor	AP casual observation, / finds scatter		<b>Ring ditch or IA hut?</b> Ring ditch, diameter 50' with a gap on N side. More likely on IA hut. Early IA and RB pottery near. R2, AZA 35 used. O1, St Joseph AP unlocated. O2, Under crop. There are no surface indications apparent. See RN09116 for Ro and RN09116B for BA	Antiquity 19, 1945, 148, 149;2, CUCAP AP 22/07/1969 AZA 35;	TL/1310/9945	B/A or IA?
34	09116b	Castor	casual observation, find		<b>Handaxe,</b> Bronze socketed axe said to be in Norwich Museum but not recorded there. Unlocated Bronze spear head with broken haft. See RN09116 for Ro and RN09116a for IA.	1.V C H Northamptonshire, 1, 1902, 143;	TL/132-/996-	B/A

Table 4. HER list with details

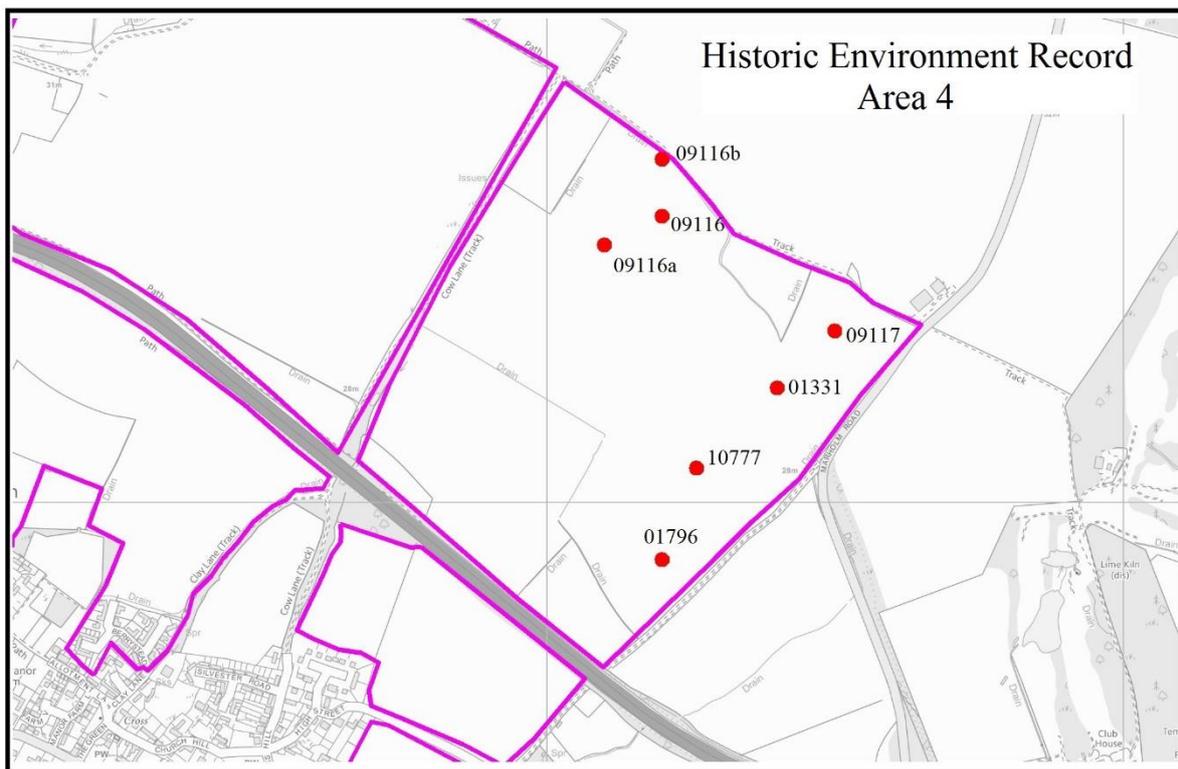


Figure 11. Area 4 showing HER plots which link with Table 4 (above).



Figure 12. The crop marked site 4, shown in Figure 13 from the north-east.  
(Copyright SGU and the NVRC)

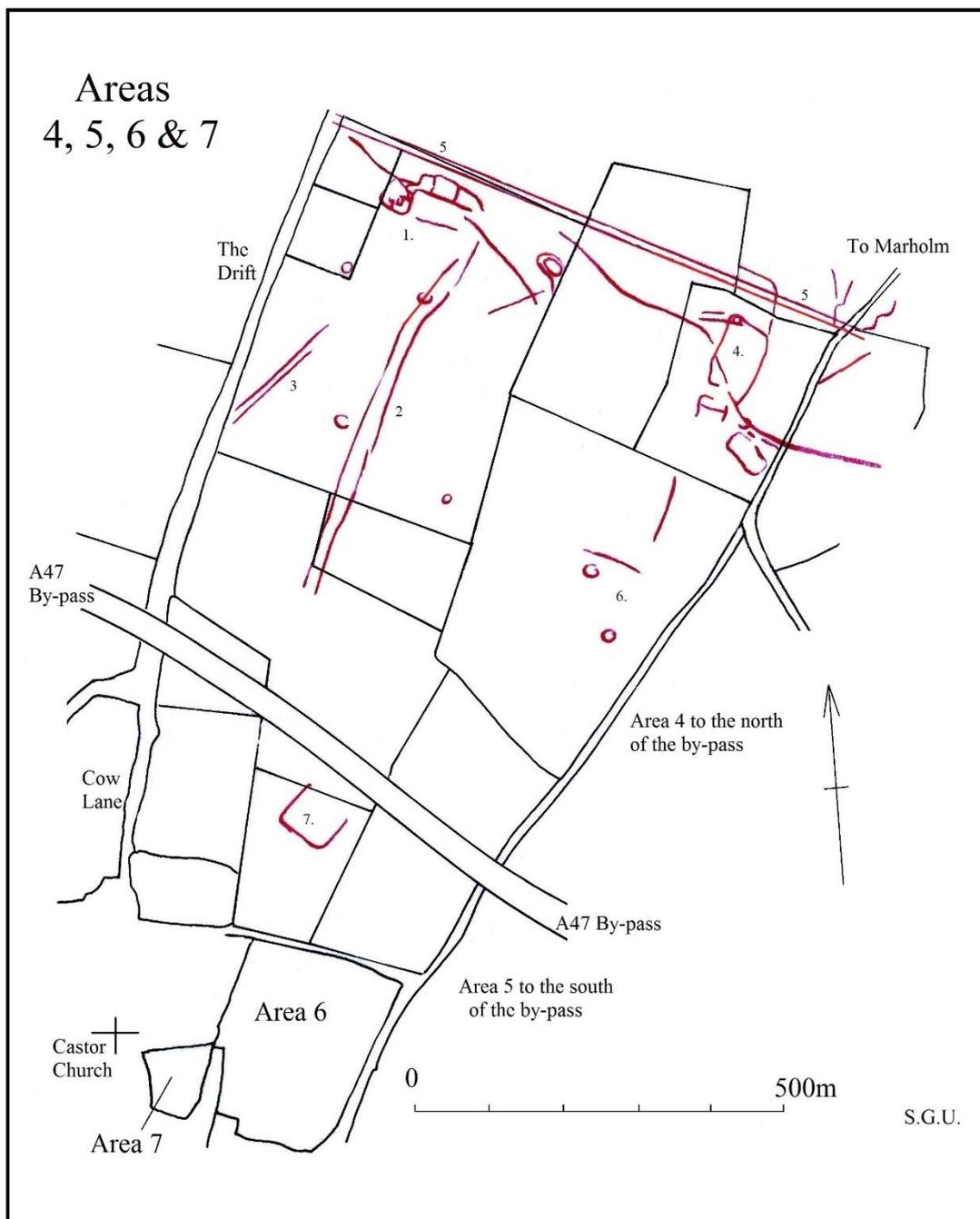


Figure 13. A plot (red) of all air photographed crop marks for Areas 4, 5, 6 & 7

Comment

Area 4 has two very complex sets of crop marks marked as 1 and 4 on Figure 13, with site 4 shown in Figure 12. Both of these sites appear to be multi period, although probably of Iron Age and Roman date. The Roman road is marked as 5 in Figure 13.

The crop marked linear features marked as 3 & 2 are undated and may relate to early landscape features – perhaps trackways but they might also relate to the open field layout of headlands and thus be of medieval date.

The features marked as 6 are both ring ditches (see Figure 14) and thus probably ploughed out B/A burial mounds, as are the two other circular features on either side of the feature marked as 2.



*Figure 14 Ring ditch 6 (see Fig.13) and other crop marked features- many of which are probably geological. However the small rectangular marks may relate to the Anglo-Saxon settlement site to the north of Salter's Tree –see below  
(Copyright SGU and the NVRC)*

**Area 5** The Area to the south of the by-pass and to the east of Cow Lane (see Fig 13 above)

There are no records within the HER for this area. However, one crop marked site appears within the AP record and this is shown in Figure 13 as number 7. This appears to be part of a rectangular enclosure of probably Iron Age or Roman date and was recorded on a recent (2015) set of APs taken under the auspices of the Castor and Ailsworth Village Planning Group.

**Areas 6 & 7** The small areas to the south of Area 5 and to the east of Castor village.  
(see Figs 1 and 13)

Area 6 has no known archaeological features within its bounds.

However, Area 7, known locally as the ‘Glebe Field’ poses considerable archaeological interest from its close proximity to the large palatial Roman structure underneath Castor church and village. During the post medieval period there were several 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century barns and other buildings shown to exist on the field – these are marked in red outline in Figure 15, which also shows the results of a contour survey indicating the presence of earth works within the field.



*Figure 15. Showing Area 7 (Glebe Field) with the outline of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings in red and with contour lines marked as dashed lines.  
(Map within the collection of the NVAT)*

The earthworks within the Glebe Field consist of banks and steeply scarped features which clearly reflect the earlier post medieval buildings within the field but may also indicate earlier buildings associated with the Roman structure which is known to exist immediately to the north of the site in the grounds of the ‘Old Rectory’, underneath the medieval church and its churchyard, and to the west under the school and its playing field (see Upex 2011). This field is part of the scheduled area protected under the Ancient Monuments Act- this protected area is shown by shading in Figure 1.

**Area 8** – The area to the north of Ailsworth and Castor and to the south of the by-pass  
(See Figures 1 and 7)

Area 8 (HER- 6 sites)

No	HE R No.	Parish	Form	Material	Description	Ref	Grid Ref	Date
35	11922	Castor	Excavation	bone, pottery	<b>Animal remains, ditch, pit, post hole</b> A desktop assessment was followed by the digging of 9 trial trenches at Clay Lane in April 1997. Although evidence of activity during various periods was found, there was no suggestion of dense occupation. The Roman evidence consisted of 2 trenches, some pits and post holes. Few artefacts were found, indicating the site lay outside of Roman Castor and was predominantly used for agriculture.	1. Macaulay, S. 1997. Roman, Late Saxon, Medieval and Post-Medieval Archaeology at Clay Lane, Castor near Peterborough. An Archaeological Evaluation 1997. Archaeological Field Unit report A113.	TL/1226/987	Roman/Saxon/medieval/post medieval
36	01889	Castor	AP		<b>Ridge and furrow</b>	1. H R O, Enclosure Map, 1898 2. <i>Northamptonshire Past and Present</i> , 1, 2, 1949, 31 - 33; 3. RAF Vertical APs, F21/58/RAF/23 05 0012, 0013, F22/58/RAF/5164 0083 - 0085, 0147, 0148, V82/RAF/796 Pt 2 0227, 0228; 4, RCHM, Peterborough New Town, 1969, 27;	TL/124-/989-	Medieval
37	50369	Ailsworth	AP		<b>Ridge and furrow</b>	1. Nene Valley Research Committee –SGU image	TL/1190/9920	Medieval
38	50511	Castor	Evaluation excavation	Pottery etc	<b>Ditch, pit, post hole, quarry</b> Evaluation trenching in April 1997 produced evidence of Early Medieval, Medieval and post Medieval archaeology in eight of the nine trenches. These remains were not extensive or representative of dense occupation. The evidence of Late Saxon/Norman occupation was confined to a single deep, steep sided pit (well ?) which was dug through the colluvium, a layer which sealed the earlier Roman archaeology (PCCHER 11922). Similarly, the absence of substantial Saxon and medieval artefacts confirms that the site has primarily been used for agriculture since the Roman period. Also see 52086 - Medieval and Post Medieval	1. Macaulay, S., 1997 'Roman, Late Saxon, medieval and Post-medieval archaeology at Clay Lane, Castor', Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit Report Number	TL/1224/9877	Roman, Early Medieval, Medieval, Post Medieval
39	52086	Castor	Evaluation excavation	Pottery etc	<b>Ditch, ridge and furrow</b> The medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains included a large	1. Macaulay, S. 1997. Roman, Late Saxon, Medieval and Post-Medieval	TL/512260/298770	Roman, Early Medieval, Medieval,

					boundary ditch and disturbed ridge and furrow in the western field. A rubble spread remains unexplained. It may have been part of a platform. The ground surface of the entire site was uneven and pitted, the result of periods of Roman and post-medieval quarrying, dumping of building stone and infilling of a pond. There were few artefacts, suggesting that the area lay outside the Roman settlement focus at Castor. Also see PCC HER 11922 - Roman; 505011 - Early Medieval.	Archaeology at Clay Lane, Castor near Peterborough. An Archaeological Evaluation 1997. Archaeological Field Unit report A113.		Post Medieval
40	52365	Ailsworth		A/Craft	<b>Crashed Aircraft</b> "On 11/12/44 Lancaster NG270 of 1651 HCU crashed in Ailsworth, Peterborough. NOTE: As the actual crash site is unknown, a generic grid reference has been assigned to the HER record."	I.A. Goodrum 1997 'Combat Ready' GMS Enterprise	TL 12/98 actual crash site unknown?	WWII Modern
42	53366	Castor		A/craft	<b>Crashed aircraft</b> "On 3/1/45 Fiesler Fi103 (V1) crashed between Castor and Ailsworth. NOTE: As the actual crash site is unknown, a generic grid reference has been assigned to the HER record."	I.A. Goodrum 1997 'Combat Ready' GMS Enterprise	TL 12/98 actual crash site unknown?	WWII Modern
43	52492	Ailsworth	Casual find.	Coin	<b>Roman coin</b> "S1. Portable Antiquity Scheme Record ID: CAM-299701 A copper-alloy Roman coin, a dupondius of Nerva (AD 96-8), dating to AD 96-7 (Reece Period 5), LIBERTAS PVBLICA S C, Libertas standing left, Mint of Rome. RIC II, pp. 227 & 229, nos. 65 & 87. Die axis is 6 o'clock, weight is 11.29g, diameter is 28.35mm, thickness is 2.94mm. This coin has been damaged by the use of Brasso, soap and a brush."	1. Portable Antiquity Scheme <a href="http://finds.org.uk">http://finds.org.uk</a>	TL/512000/299000 (should this be TL /120/990 ?SGU – see HER plot)	Roman

*Table 5. HER list with details*

## Comments

There are no air photographs which relate to this area, although the HER (01889 & 50369) does indicate that medieval ridge and furrow was seen on air photographs from collections not seen during this research.

The HER suggests that there is a general noise of archaeological material in this area without anything firmly ascribed to a settlement or occupation site. Some of this material (ie. HER 52482) may simply be finds associated with the major Roman buildings within the core of Castor village.

The HER also records (53366 & 52365) two crash sites of aircraft from World War II. The exact location of each aircraft is unknown but is within the grid squares listed.

Not listed within the HER but shown on early maps of the parishes and on air photographs are the medieval drove ways called 'The Maffit' and 'Cow' and 'Clay' Lanes,

which lead into 'The Drift'. Clay Lane is referred to in a rental of c. 1400 (Glover *et al.* 1933, p 233). All three trackways are shown on a map dated 1846 and show how they lead from the village centres out into the open fields, with the Drift leading to into Old Field and Old Field Pond (Old Field is also mentioned in a c. 1400 rental).

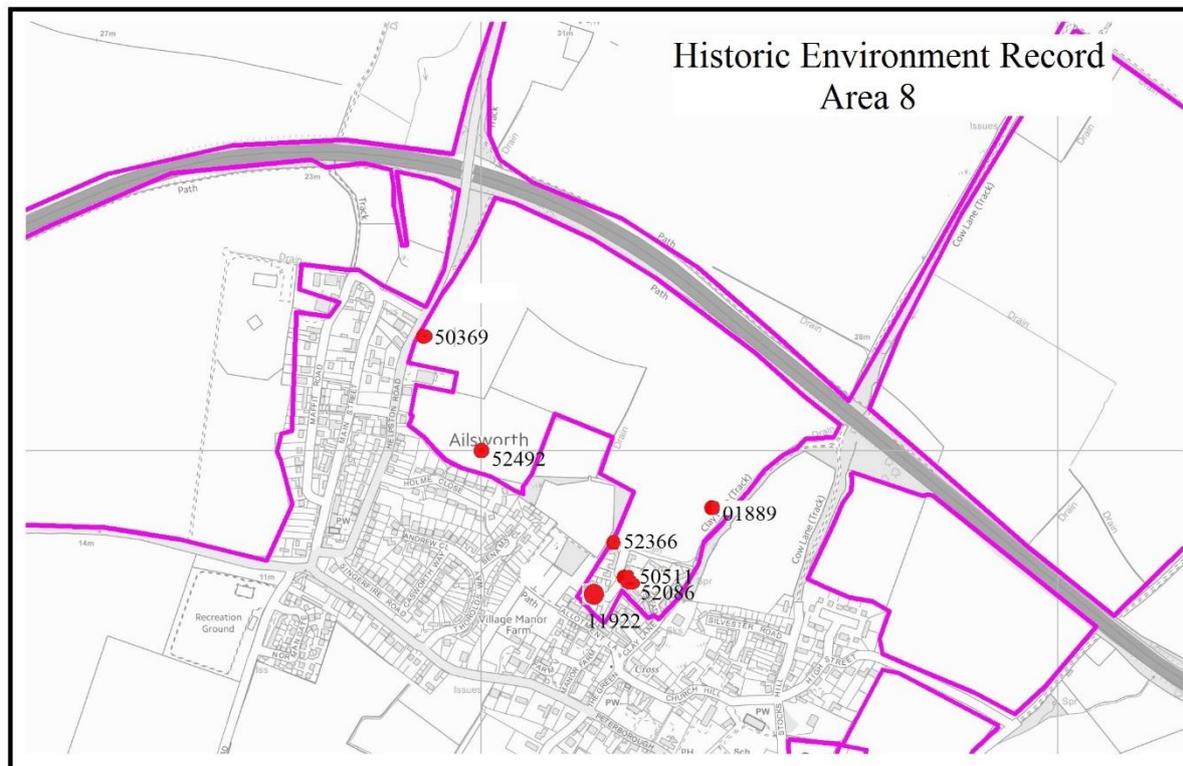


Figure 16 Area 8 showing HER plots which link with Table 5 (above).

**Area 9** The area to the west of Ailsworth and south of the by-pass.  
( see Figures 1, 5 and 17).

Area 9 (HER- 16 sites)

No	HER No.	Parish	Form	Material	Description	Ref	Grid Ref:-	Date
44	1007 2	Ailsworth	AP		<b>Rectilinear enclosure, ring ditch</b>	1. NMR APs, TL1198/56; 2.SGU-HER	TL/116- /989-	B/A ?
45	0200 3	Ailsworth	Casual find	bone, iron, metal	<b>Human remains, spear,</b>	1.RCHM, Peterborough New Town, 1966, 432, 2.Peterborough Museum 16th Annual Report, 1888, 40 3. , OS; S2. Monument Number 364415, Pastscap [Online]. Available at: <a href="http://www.pastscap.e.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=364415">http://www.pastscap.e.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=364415</a>	TL/115992	Early Med
46	0047 6	Ailsworth	Casual find	quern	<b>Quern stone</b>	1.Peterborough New Town, 1966, 43, (RCHM); 2, 2.RCHM, Peterborough New Town, 18	TL/115992	Roman

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						3. OS; S2. Monument Number 364418, Pastscape [Online]. Available at: <a href="http://www.pastscape.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=364418">http://www.pastscape.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=364418</a>		
47	50667	Ailsworth	Exc	?	<b>Finds unclear in the data</b>	1. Network Archaeology, April 1999 'Peterborough to Lutton 1050mm Gas Pipeline. Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Watching Brief 1998', Volume 1: Report & Volume 2 Appendices', Network Archaeology Ltd Report no. 135	TL/1134/9927	Roman /Medieval
48	50668	Ailsworth	Field Survey	pot, ridge and furrow, tile	<b>pot, ridge and furrow, tile</b>	1. Transco Gas Pipeline, Site 6, Section 5, Plot 26-27 2. Network Archaeology, April 1999 'Peterborough to Lutton 1050mm Gas Pipeline. Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Watching Brief 1998', Volume 1: Report & Volume 2 Appendices', Network Archaeology Ltd Report no. 135	TL/1125/9903	Med
49	50686	Ailsworth	Exc	pot, lithic tool	<b>Pit, pot, lithic implement</b>	1. Transco Gas Pipeline, Site 32, Section 5, Plot 26 2. Network Archaeology, April 1999 'Peterborough to Lutton 1050mm Gas Pipeline. Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Watching Brief 1998', Volume 1: Report & Volume 2 Appendices', Network Archaeology Ltd Report no. 135	TL/1135/9935	Neo
50	50687	Ailsworth	Watching Brief		<b>Pit, posthole</b>	1. Transco Gas Pipeline, Site 33, Section 5, Plot 27 2. Network Archaeology, April 1999 'Peterborough to Lutton 1050mm Gas Pipeline. Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Watching Brief 1998', Volume 1: Report & Volume 2 Appendices', Network Archaeology Ltd Report no. 135	TL/11272/99184	?
51	08464	Ailsworth	Exc	?	<b>Uncertain what was found</b>	1. Nene Valley Research Committee, Annual Report, 1984 -	TL/11354/99399	?

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						1985, 6		
52	08466	Ailsworth	Exc	?	<b>Uncertain what was found</b>	1.Nene Valley Research Committee, Annual Report, 1984 - 1985, 6;	TL/11069/99306	?
53	08470	Ailsworth	Exc	?	<b>Uncertain what was found</b>	1.Nene Valley Research Committee, Annual Report, 1984 - 1985, 6;	TL/11520/99454	?
54	08473	Ailsworth	Exc	?	<b>Uncertain what was found</b>	1.Nene Valley Research Committee Annual Report, 1984 - 1985;	TL/11436/99427	?
55	09105	Ailsworth	AP		<b>Enclosure, ring ditch</b>	1.CUCAP APs 22/07/1969 AZA 26, 27,30/06/1970 BCS 56, 58 2 Northamptonshire County Council APs, 01/07/1984, NMR ref2493/14, 15; SGU Aps held in HER	TL/116- /991-	B/A and I/A?
56	51844	Ailsworth	Exc & Watching Brief	Pottery	<b>Road, ditch, gully, pit, pot</b>	1.Transco Gas Pipeline, Site 32, Section 5, Plot 26 2. Network Archaeology, April 1999 'Peterborough to Luton 1050mm Gas Pipeline. Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Watching Brief 1998', Volume 1: Report & Volume 2 Appendices', Network Archaeology Ltd Report no. 135	TL/1135/9935	Roman
57	51845	Ailsworth	Exc & Watching Brief	knife, shears, spear, spindle-whorl, pot	<b>Inhumation, post hole, knife, pit, shears, spear, spindle whorl, pot</b>	1.Transco Gas Pipeline, Site 32, Section 5, Plot 2 2. Network Archaeology, April 1999 'Peterborough to Luton 1050mm Gas Pipeline. Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Watching Brief 1998', Volume 1: Report & Volume 2 Appendices', Network Archaeology Ltd Report no. 135	TL/1135/9935	Early Med.
58	51846	Ailsworth	Exc & Watching Brief	bone, iron, pottery	<b>Ridge and furrow</b>	1.Transco Gas Pipeline, Site 32, Section 5, Plot 26 2. , Network Archaeology, April 1999 'Peterborough to Luton 1050mm Gas Pipeline. Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Watching Brief 1998', Volume 1: Report & Volume 2 Appendices', Network Archaeology Ltd Report no. 135	TL/1135/9935	Med
59	521209	Ailsworth	Metal detector	strap end, findspot	<b>Strap end,</b>	The Portable Antiquities Scheme.	TL/511000/299000?	Early med

			find		findspot –Metal detectorist find	www.finds.org.uk	*should this be 115992? (SGU)	
60	52137	Ailsworth	Evaluation, exc. feature		<b>Ridge and furrow</b>	Taylor, G, June 2011, 'Archaeological Evaluation On Land To The Rear Of 11 Main Street / Maffit Road, Ailsworth, Peterborough', Archaeological Project Services, Report Ni. 62/11	TL/511670/2 98900 11 Main Street / Maffit Road, Ailsworth	Med

Table 6. HER list with details

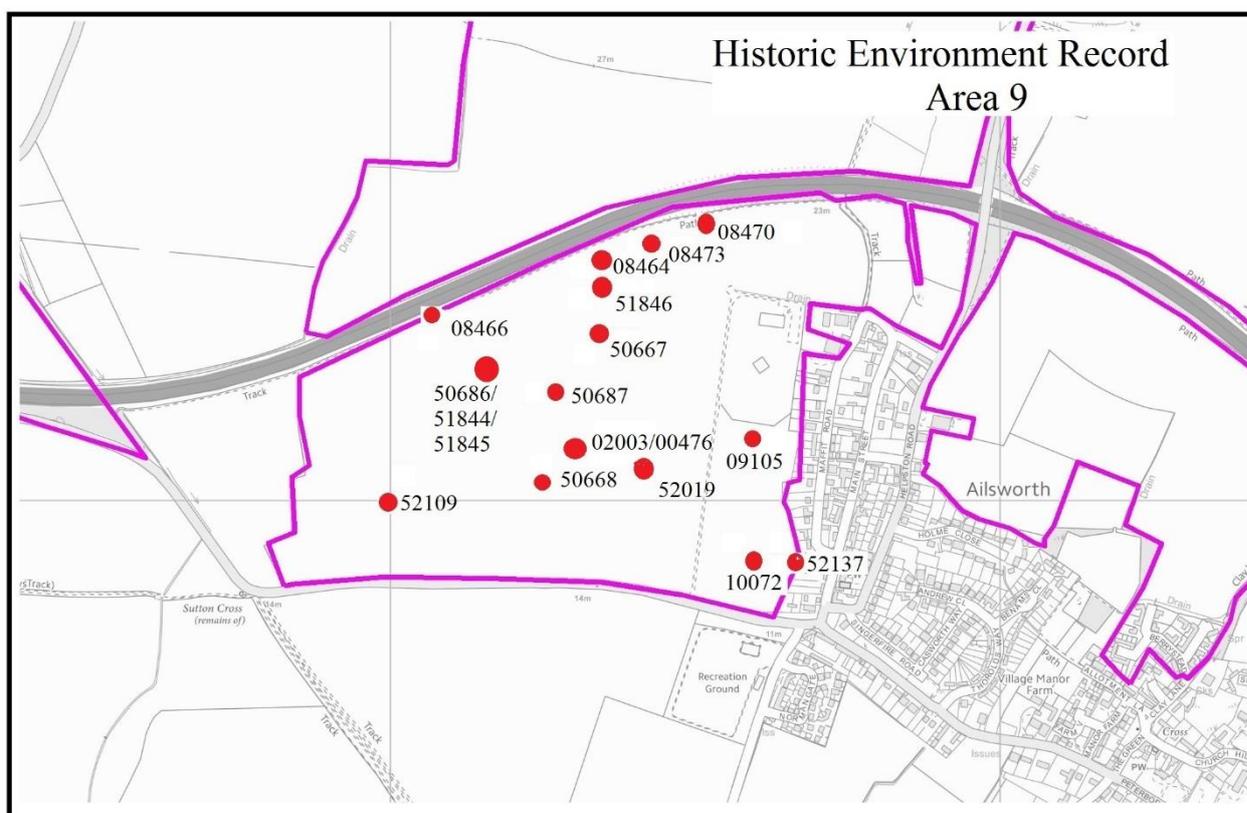


Figure 17. Area 9 showing HER plots which link with Table 6 (above).

### Comment

The AP plot for this area is shown in Figure 5 (above). There are two significant sites within this area, one is the line of Roman King Street which is marked as 5 in Figure 5 and runs roughly north-south. The other is a series of crop marks to the west of Ailsworth marked as 4 in Figure 5. This last site consists of two ring ditches (see Fig. 18), presumably the sites of ploughed out B/A barrows and a series of linear features which may form an enclosure, although this is not entirely clear. (Site 4 in Figure 5 equates with site 1 shown in Figure 19 below.)

The HER has several find spots listed for items ranging from Neolithic axes to strap ends from Saxon belt fittings. Some of these numbered finds come from watching briefs and excavations in advance of the Transco Pipeline.



*Figure 18. Air photograph of ring ditches and other features to the west of Ailsworth. (Copyright SGU and the NVRC)*

**Area 10** – The area around the immediate area of the villages of Castor and Ailsworth  
(see Figures 1 and 19 below)

\*The areas within the villages of Ailsworth and Castor have a considerable number of HER numbered sites and find spots which are listed. This density of sites and find spots becomes intense within the area around Castor church and the site of the former Roman palatial structure. To this end the total number of HER references has been dispensed with in this report and the reader is referred to the published works on the area (RCHM 1969 passim; Upex S.G. 2011 2011).

\*The Praetorium is indicated as number 3 in the village map shown as Figure 19.

Area around the village (3 sites = \*HER =two main sites plus a single entry (number 63) for numerous hits within the village envelope)

No	HER No.	Parish	Form	Material	Description	Ref	Grid Ref:-	Date
61	01022	Castor	Earthwork under grass		<b>Medieval moat</b> Small rectangular ditched moat with wide ditch and an external bank. Outside of the west corner of the larger enclosure is another, smaller square moated site. *Shown as no. 9 on village map	1.RCHM 1969 p. 26, no. 45, Fig 12 2. Peterborough HER 3. *Shown as no. 9 in Figure 19	TL11959854	Medieval
62	09819 & 09819b	Castor	findspot	Pot/coins	<b>Roman pottery/coins and early medieval pottery</b> Roman pottery and coins along with early medieval pottery and a medieval building.	1.Peterborough HER 2.Between Clay and Cow lane?	TL125987	Roman/ early medieval /medieval
63	Numerous HER references immediately within and around the church and village area of Castor and Ailsworth				<b>Roman and early medieval and medieval finds and buildings.</b> Numerous references to Roman ,Saxon and Medieval finds within and around the two village areas but especially around the church and underlying Roman remains at Castor. The best listing here is the HER which contains all references to archaeological finds, watching briefs, evaluations and full excavations. For a full review of work around the Praetorium see Upex 2011 *The Praetorium is shown as number 3 in village map	1.Peterborough HER 2. RCHM 1969 passim 3. Upex S.G. 2011 'The Praetorium of Edmund Artis' <i>Britannia</i> 2011. Vol 42 4. *The Praetorium is shown as number 3 in Figure 19	Within the village envelope	Roman /early medieval / medieval

Table 7. HER details for Area 10 (see Fig. 19)

Sites around the village not listed within the HER but shown on air photographs

No	HER No.	Parish	Form	Material	Description	Ref	Grid Ref:-	Date
64	Not in HER	Castor	Earthwork		<b>Medieval moat?</b>	1.RCHM 1969 p26, no. 45	TL12249820	Medieval?
65	Not in HER	Castor	Earthwork and AP		<b>Ridge and furrow</b> Ridge and furrow to the west of Port Way and to the east of the moated site at TL11959854	*Shown as no 10 in Village map AP from ACVPG	TL121985	Medieval
66	Not in HER	Ailsworth	AP		<b>Ring ditch (?) and enclosures?</b> To the west of medieval moated site	*Shown as no 8 in Fig 19 AP from ACVPG	TL118986	B/A & IA?
67	Not in HER	Castor	AP		<b>Quarry</b> Quarry site to the east of Splash Lane and to the west of no 4 within this listing	*Shown as no 5 in Fig 19 AP from ACVPG	TL126981	Medieval ?
68	Not in HER	Castor	AP		<b>Enclosure</b> Possibly Iron age or Roman To the east of quarry no 5 (above)	*Shown as no 4 in Fig 19 AP from ACVPG	TL126980	I/A or Roman ?
69	Not in HER	Castor	AP		<b>Enclosure</b> Possibly Iron age or Roman	*Shown as no 2 in Fig 19 AP from ACVPG	TL127988	I/A or Roman ?
70	Shown in Fig 19 as no. 7	Ailsworth	AP		<b>King Street Roman road and field system</b> A series of field enclosures appearing to be set out off the line of King Street and probably Roman	*Shown as no 7 in Fig 19 Listed within the general HER for Normangate Field and the area of industrial suburbs SGU AP collection and NVAT	TL114984	Roman
71	Shown in Fig 19 as no. 1	Ailsworth	AP		<b>Ring ditches and enclosures (?)</b> See also entry above	*Shown as no 1 in Fig 19 1. NMR APs, TL1198/56; 2.SGU-HER	TL116989	B/A ? and I/A ?

*Table 8. Area 10 - sites around the village not listed within the HER but shown on air photographs (see Figure 19)*

Comment

Several archaeological sites within Area 10 appear not to be listed within the HER but are known from recent air photographs and fieldwork - these are shown in Table 8 (above) and Figure 19 (below). Other sites within the core of Castor village have been listed under a general heading of ‘numerous sites’ (see Table 7, site number 63) as there are simply too many to deal with in this present report.

The two most critical areas are those relating to the medieval moated site (HER 01022) and the Roman ‘Praetorium’ underneath Castor church, which includes the area of ‘Glebe Field’, part of the scheduled area of the ancient monument, which is listed also within Area 7- see Fig 15.



Figure 19. Sites of archaeological significance immediately around the villages of Ailsworth and Castor – based on air photographs, HER, published material and fieldwork.

## Conclusions

The landscape of Ailsworth and Castor shows that there are considerable numbers of very significant archaeological features spread across both parishes; many of these sites lie within critical areas which may be developed in the future in response to expansion needs of Greater Peterborough. There are many, apparently isolated, monuments such as ring ditches which on their own are important to record archaeologically, but as groups of ring ditches, they become increasingly significant as they detail the way the landscape was utilised by earlier societies.

It should be recommended that any change to the present landscape use, especially if this involved the development of areas of land for building, must consider the archaeological recording of these landscapes, either by watching briefs, evaluations or in some cases large scale excavations. The understanding and recording of the total landscape of the *Durobrivae* area is very significant to the long term research projects being undertaken currently by the NVAT and the land to the north of both Ailsworth and Castor falls within this research remit.

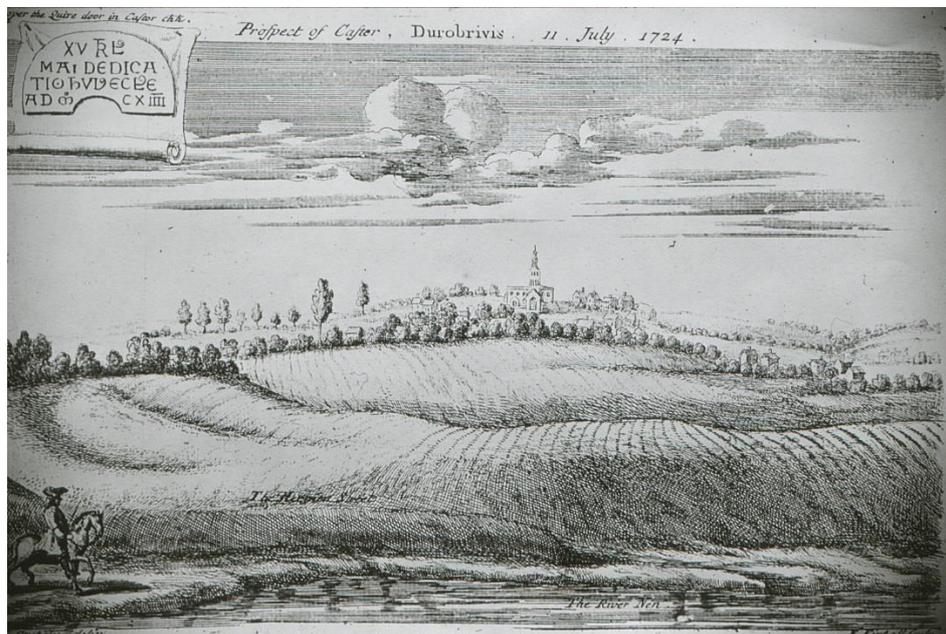
Sites of multi period settlements, and significant historical landscape importance are to be found as follows:-

- **Area 1**  
HER number 05665 describes part of an enclosure probably part of a much larger settlement including a ring ditch (B/A?) and another small enclosure and a pit alignment. HER number 00227 also seems to be associated with another (second) ring ditch and a liner feature.
- **Area 2**  
Sites shown in Figure 5 as numbers 1, 2, 6 and 7 are all worthy of large scale evaluations to determine their date and extents, followed by, in some cases, large scale excavation. These all appear to be multi-period and complex sites. Site 3, a ring ditch, would warrant full archaeological excavation and the line of the Roman King Street (road) should be either preserved in part or cross sectioned and recorded in several places.
- **Area 3**  
Sites 2 and 5 shown in Figure 7 appear as complex multi-period sites and would require large scale evaluations and area excavations to recover their details. The probably Bronze Age field system recorded as site 6 in Figure 7 would require systematic trenching to record its layout and confirm its date. Site 1 appears to be a set of crossing pit alignments which would need partial excavation to unravel their relationships and possible date.
- **Area 4**  
Sites 1 and 4 shown in Figure 13 appear to be very complex sets of enclosures of several periods and large scale open area excavation would be desirable here. The line of the Roman road (number 5) to the north of this area should be preserved where possible or where destroyed cross sections should be cut and recorded. The ring ditches marked as 6 in Figure 13 should be fully recorded along with the other ring ditches to the west. The area around and to the south of number 6 should be evaluated for settlement remains associated with the larger Saxon site to the north and outside of the area under discussion within this report (see Figure 14).

- **Area 5**  
One site, shown as number 7 in Figure 13, should be fully recorded by evaluation trenches and small scale excavation.
- **Area 6**  
There are no known or recorded archaeological features within this area.
- **Area 7**  
The field known as the ‘Glebe Field’ shown in Figure 15 should be fully appraised by all known archaeological methods prior to any alteration of the present landscape regimes which operate over the site. The site is very close to the site of the so-called ‘Pretorium’ – a major public Roman building of national importance and may in fact form part of its eastern range of buildings. The site should be either preserved under its present condition as a Scheduled Ancient Monument area or totally investigated by detailed excavation and publication prior to any land use changes.
- **Area 8**  
There are several miscellaneous sites which are recorded on the HER within this area, including two crash sites from world war II aircraft (both sites are not recorded precisely). In all cases any development within this area warrants a series of watching briefs, evaluations and in some cases may then warrant detailed area excavation.
- **Area 9**  
The complex of crop marks shown in Figure 5 (number 4) should be fully recorded by evaluation and area excavations. The line of the Roman Road (King Street) should be preserved or at least where destruction were to take place a series of detailed cross sections and excavation made of its surfaces.
- **Area 10**  
The area immediately around the villages of Ailsworth and Castor and shown in Figure 19 has various sites of significance, chief of which is the area of the ‘Praetorium’ and the ‘Glebe Field’ (see Area 7 above). The core of the area around the church yard (but not the church yard) including Glebe Field is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and as such protected by government legislation. The site of the medieval manor site is similarly protected as a SAM. Other sites recorded in Figure 19 are numbers 2 and 4, the former outlined already in Area 5 (above). Site 1, in Fig 19, equates to site 4 shown in Figure 5 (Area 9 above). Sites 6 and 7 to the south of the built up area have links with the Normangate Field complex and as such would need full investigation should their landscape situations change. The area of ridge and furrow, shown as number 10 in Figure 19, should be preserved as it represents one of the last vestiges of this form of cultivation feature left within the parishes.  

The medieval route ways into and out of the villages are also worthy of conservation and protection. The Maffitt (Maffit Road) into Ailsworth and both Cow Lane and Clay Lane which lead into The Drift at Castor are particularly noteworthy and important relicts of the medieval roadways around the two villages.
- **Additional comment**  
Views into and from the core areas of both Ailsworth and Castor are significant aspects of the visual and historical landscape and can be equated to views seen by many past generations. Particularly noteworthy is the view of

Castor church from areas within Normangate Field to the south of the village, first represented by an engraving by William Stukeley in 1724 and shown in Figure 20 below.



*Figure 20. Published engraving (1724) by William Stukeley showing the view to Castor church from Normangate Field.*

Similarly the view of the church at Castor from the within the area of the Roman town of *Durobrivae* shown in Figure 21 conveys the impression the Roman Praetorium would have had from the Roman perspective in say the second century.



*Figure 21. Castor church seen from within the area of the Roman town of Durobrivae.*

These and other distant views which provide a visual setting for the historic framework of the settlements of both villages outlined within this report form important aspects of the way modern populations view their past. As such they form significant settings for the narrative of the past where people now live and as such need to be respected, protected and conserved.

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## **Abbreviations**

NMR = National Monuments Record

RP = Rog Palmer

NCC = Northamptonshire County Council

RCHM = Royal Commission for Historic Monuments

AP=Air photograph.

Obs= Observation

Exc=Excavation

Med = Medieval

I/A = Iron Age

Neo= Neolithic

B/A Bronze Age

RB = Romano - British

SMR = Sites and Monuments Record

CUCAP = Cambridge University Committee for Air Photography

SGU = Stephen Upex

CBA = Council for British Archaeology

NRO = Northamptonshire Record Office

HRO = Huntingdonshire Record Office

VCH = Victoria County History