

**Technical Report: Biological remains from a site at Lawns Farm, Dunswell,
East Riding of Yorkshire (site code: TSEP420)**

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Summary

Eight sediment samples and a small quantity of hand-collected bone from deposits revealed by excavations at Lawns Farm, Dunswell, were initially submitted for an evaluation of their bioarchaeological potential. The recovered biological remains were of no interpretative value. With the possible exception of the horse scapula fragments from Context 2015, no material dateable by radiocarbon assay was recovered. This report therefore represents a final contribution to the site archive.

Keywords: LAWNS FARM; DUNSWELL; EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE; PREHISTORIC; PLANT REMAINS; VERTEBRATE REMAINS

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Introduction and methods

Eight sediment samples ('GBA'/'BS' *sensu* Dobney *et al.* 1992), and a small quantity of hand-collected bone, were recovered from the deposits. Only a few artefacts (including sherds of handmade pottery and a polished stone axe) were recovered from the deposits and these indicated a probable Bronze Age date. All of the material was submitted to the Environmental Archaeology Unit for an evaluation of its bioarchaeological potential.

Sediment samples

The sediment samples were inspected in the laboratory. Though unpromising, four of the samples were selected for investigation because of the potentially early date of the deposits and the slight possibility of recovering sufficient ancient biological material for radiocarbon dating. Their lithologies were recorded, using a standard *pro forma*, prior to processing, following the procedures of Kenward *et al.* (1980; 1986) for recovery of plant and invertebrate macrofossils. The washovers and residues were examined for plant remains. The washovers were also examined for invertebrate remains, and the residues were examined for other biological and artefactual remains.

Table 1 shows a list of the submitted samples and notes on their treatment.

Vertebrate remains

For those hand-collected vertebrate remains that were recorded, data were entered directly into a series of tables using a purpose-built input system and *Paradox* software. Subjective records were made of the state of preservation, colour of the fragments, and the appearance of broken surfaces ('angularity'). Brief notes were made concerning Just moist, mid greyish gingery-brown, crisp to unconsolidated (working more or less plastic and sticky when wet), sandy silty clay with tiny voids (?root channels or insect burrows). Modern roots and ?iron pan were present in the sample.

fragment size, dog gnawing, burning, butchery and fresh breaks where applicable.

Where possible, fragments were identified to species or species group using the PRS modern comparative reference collection. Fragments not identifiable to species were described as the 'unidentified' fraction.

Results

Sediment samples

The results are presented in context number order. Archaeological information, provided by the excavator, is presented in square brackets.

Context 1003 [fill of slot in base of trackway ditch 1004; possibly Iron Age/Romano-British]
Sample 2/T (2 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover)

Just moist, light to mid gingery-brown, crisp to crumbly (under heavy hand pressure, working slightly sticky then disaggregating in water), very slightly clay, slightly silty, sand. Stones (20 to 60 mm) were present and ?iron pan was abundant in the sample.

The very large residue of about 550 cm³ consisted of iron-concreted sediment (?iron pan), with sand and a little gravel; the tiny washover contained further sand and iron-concreted sand grains with traces of what was probably modern plant detritus. No invertebrate remains were recovered.

Context 1014 [primary fill of ditch 1009; possibly Iron Age/Romano-British]
Sample 1/BS (3 kg sieved to 300 microns. No washover fraction)

There was a large residue of about 600 cm³ of iron-concreted sediment (?iron pan), with sand and a little gravel; there was no washover from this sample. No invertebrate remains were recovered.

Context 2008 [fill of pit 2018; ?hearth]

Sample 4/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover)

Just moist, slightly purplish mid grey-brown mottled with orange-brown and locally gingery-brown, just stiff to crumbly (working plastic and very sticky), slightly sandy clay. (Notes made in the field suggest that this fill contained burnt material but no such material was seen in this examination).

The very small residue of barely 100 cm³ comprised undisaggregated clay and iron-concreted sediment (?pan) in rounded clasts to about 5 mm, with a very little quartz sand; the small washover was of sand and concreted sediment, with some modern rootlet fragments. No invertebrate remains were recovered.

Context 2022 [primary fill of ditch 2023]

Sample 7/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover)

Moist, light grey mottled light ginger-brown, stiff (working plastic), clay with ?iron pan and ?manganese present.

There was a small to moderate-sized residue of barely 200 cm³ of iron-concreted sediment, perhaps pan, mostly in small, rather rounded clasts, with a little gravel; the small washover was of sand and concreted sediment with a single ?modern seed of chickweed, *Stellaria media* (L.) Vill. No invertebrate remains were recovered.

Vertebrate remains

Ten bone fragments, representing a single horse scapula, were recovered from Context 2015. The fragments showed evidence of extensive fresh breakage and were extremely poorly preserved.

Discussion

The recovered biological remains were of no interpretative value. With the possible exception of the horse scapula fragments from Context 2015, no material dateable by radiocarbon techniques was recovered.

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References

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Table 1: List of examined sediment samples from excavations at Lawns Farm, Dunswell, with notes on their treatment.

Context	Sample	Notes
1003	2	2 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover

1014	1	3 kg sieved to 300 microns. No washover fraction
2008	4	3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover
2022	7	3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover