



Environmental Report No. 86/78  
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School of East Anglian Studies,  
University of East Anglia,  
Earlham Hall,  
Norwich.

Your reference

Our reference

Date 24/11/78

Dear Peter,

Please find enclosed your  
report(s) for the site(s) of Ipswich.

Please could you pass this on to the excavator.

I would be most grateful if you could send me a draft  
copy of any proposed publication which includes the report(s)  
or extracts from the report(s).

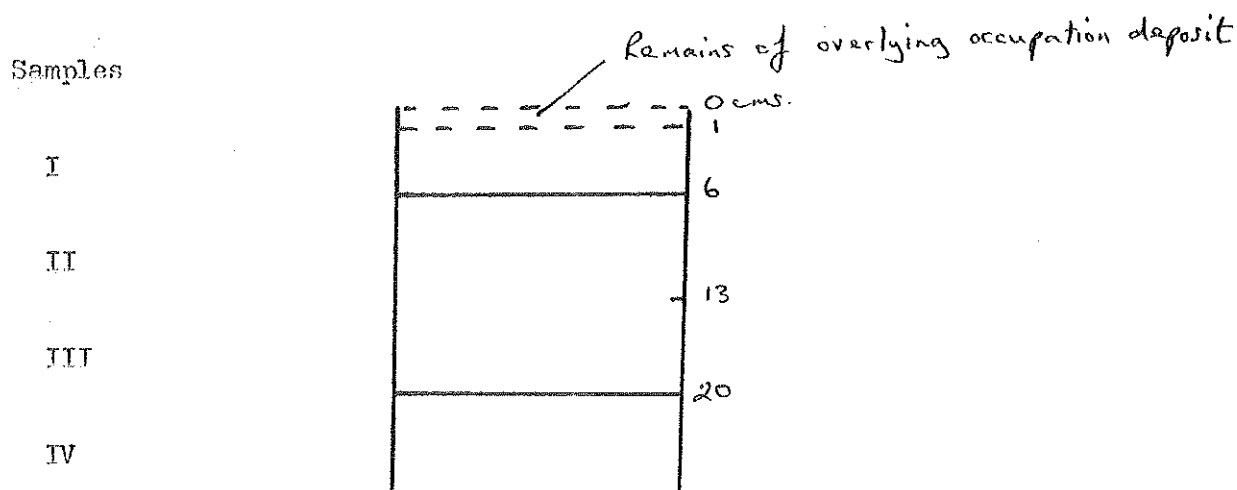
Please acknowledge receipt of this communication.

Yours sincerely,

Helen

REPORT ON A SOIL AT IPSWICH, SUFFOLK By Helen C M Keeley and R Macphail

During the early part of 1978 excavations were carried out by the Suffolk Archaeological Unit of part of the Saxon town of Ipswich. A soil profile was exposed below the occupation deposits, which was thought to represent the original soil prior to occupation of the site, and this has been examined and sampled by H Keeley. Ignition and particle size analysis were carried out on the samples by R Macphail.



The soil was developed on sands and gravels and was well-drained (mottles were absent). 1 to 6 cms was brown (10YR5/3) moderately friable medium sand with weak medium subangular blocky structure, containing common charcoal and burnt clay fragments. Roots were absent but there were traces of earthworm activity. Stones were common, gravel to small, rounded and angular flint pebbles, 6 to 20 cms was dark yellowish brown (10YR3/4) structureless, friable medium sand containing abundant stones, gravel to medium. Roots were absent.

Below 20 cms was yellowish brown (10YR5/6) friable, structureless medium sand and gravel containing more clay than over-lying horizons. Stones were abundant, gravel to medium.

Samples were ignited and loss on ignition found to be fairly constant (range 1.4%–1.6%, mean 1.525%). Ignition colours indicated that sample I was less iron-rich (containing about 0.13 to 0.15% Fe) than samples II, III or IV (which contained approximately 0.15 to 0.18% Fe).

These figures are the result of comparing the Ipswich samples with ignited soil samples of known Fe content.

Results of particle size analysis were as follows:-

Sample number	% Clay	% Silt	% Sand
I	2	8	90
II	5	10	85
III	2	7	91
IV	10	3	87

The soil texture is therefore fine to medium sand; the silt fraction is mainly dominated by coarse silt. The lowest horizon (sample IV) contained noticeably more clay than those above.

On initial examination the soil section appeared to represent a truncated profile of a soil showing evidence of podzolisation. The ignition colours tend to confirm this - the upper horizon show signs of eluviation. The A horizon may have been incorporated into the overlying occupation deposits and the upper layer of the truncated profile also shows disturbance.