



NKC Joint Fieldwork Report

June-July 2004



NKC Joint Fieldwork Report

June-July 2004

Prepared for:

Kent County Council
Heritage Conservation Group
Strategic Planning
Environmental Management
Invicta House
County Hall
Maidstone
ME14 1XX

By:

Wessex Archaeology
Portway House
Old Sarum Park
Salisbury
SP4 6EB

Ref: 56320.03

January 2005

NKC Joint Fieldwork Report

June- July 2004

Report ref. 56320.03

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Kent County Council (Heritage Conservation Group) to undertake joint fieldwork with European partners in relation to the Planarch 2, action 2A: archaeological evaluation for wetlands.

Planarch 2 is a European Regional Development Fund Interreg IIIB project concerning transnational co-operation on spatial planning in north-west Europe. Among its activities, Planarch 2 seeks to undertake active joint fieldwork related to archaeologically vulnerable areas, such as wetlands, on both sides of the southern North Sea.

This project forms a component of Action 2A of Planarch 2 regarding constituting a model for archaeological survey and evaluation of coastal wetlands. Several partners from England, Holland and Belgium are carrying out the project:

- Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group (represented by Wessex Archaeology);
- Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU);
- Dutch National Archaeology Service (Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek- ROB);
- Flemish Institute for the Immobile Heritage of the Flemish Community (Vlaams Instituut voor het Onroerend Erfgoed- VIOE);
- Belgian Central Archaeological Inventory (Centrale Archaeologische Inventaris- CAI)

The joint fieldwork was undertaken in North Kent between the 28th June and 2nd of July 2004. Wessex Archaeology supplied the workboat for the survey work carried out during the fieldwork.

Participating in the joint fieldwork were: Ellen Heppell and Teresa O'Connor (Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit); Mark Dunkley and Brian Hession (Wessex Archaeology on behalf of Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group); Liesbet Schietecatte (Flanders Institute for Archaeology); Andrea Otte (Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek); Katrien Cousserier and Isabel Jansen (Belgian Central Archaeological Inventory, Centrale Archaeologische Inventaris, Instituut voor het Archeologisch Patrimonium). The group was also joined by Kate Smuts, a guest of Liesbet Schietecatte. This report outlines the main events and issues raised by the exchange visit.

NKC Joint Fieldwork Report

June- July 2004

Report ref. 56320.03

Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Kent County Council (KCC) Heritage Conservation Group. Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Lis Dyson of KCC for her assistance.

Wessex archaeology would also like to thank the representatives of the Flanders Institute for the Immobile Heritage (VIOE), the Belgian Central Archaeological Inventory, the Dutch National Archaeology Service and Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit for their participation in the Kent partner fieldwork and for their assistance and insights throughout the exchange.

Fieldwork was carried out by Mark Dunkley and Brian Hession. This report was prepared by Brian Hession. Illustrations were prepared by Kitty Brandon. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Deanna Groom. Quality control was carried out by Dr Antony Firth, Head of Coastal and Marine Projects.

NKC Joint Fieldwork Report

June-July 2004

Report ref. 56320.03

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| 2. DIARY OF EVENTS..... | 2 |
| 2.1. MONDAY 28 TH JUNE..... | 2 |
| 2.2. TUESDAY 29 TH JUNE..... | 3 |
| 2.3. WEDNESDAY 30 TH JUNE..... | 3 |
| 2.4. THURSDAY 1 ST JULY..... | 4 |
| 2.5. FRIDAY 2 ND JULY..... | 4 |
| 3. DISCUSSION..... | 5 |
| 4. CONCLUSIONS..... | 10 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY..... | 14 |

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1 The geographic scope of the Planarch 2 areas and the north Kent fieldwork study area.

Plate 1 View of the workboat used during the exchange week on Burntwick Island.

Plate 2 Exchange participants familiarising themselves with the GeoXT and Husky survey units.

Plate 3 Exchange participants surveying near Lower Halstow.

Plate 4 Exchange participants visiting a Romano-British site on Stangate Creek.

NKC Joint Fieldwork Report

June- July 2004

Report Ref: 56320.03

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by Kent County Council (KCC) (Heritage Conservation Group) to run an exchange of field personnel in relation to the Planarch 2, action 2A: archaeological evaluation for wetlands.
- 1.2. Planarch 2 is a European Regional Development Fund INTERREG IIIB project concerning transnational co-operation on spatial planning in north-west Europe. Among its activities, Planarch 2 seeks to undertake active joint fieldwork related to archaeologically vulnerable areas on both sides of the southern North Sea, such as wetlands.
- 1.3. This project forms a component of Action 2A of Planarch 2 regarding constituting a model for archaeological survey and evaluation of coastal wetlands. Several partners from England, Holland and Belgium are carrying out the project;
 - Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group (represented by WA);
 - Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU);
 - Dutch National Archaeology Service (Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek);
 - Flemish Institute for the Immobile Heritage of the Flemish Community (Vlaams Instituut voor het Onroerend Erfgoed- VIOE);
 - Belgian Central Archaeological Inventory (Centrale Archaeologische Inventaris- CAI)
- 1.4. Joint fieldworking with European partners was undertaken in north Kent between the 28th of June and the 2nd of July 2004 (**Figure 1**). The programme of work undertaken was devised to closely mirror the normal working programme of the North Kent Coast Survey. It introduced participants to aspects of local liaison; the environments to be encountered in the Medway and Swale estuaries; a range of site types from differing periods; and the access and survey methodologies employed day-to-day.

2. DIARY OF EVENTS

2.1. Monday 28th June

2.1.1. The exchange participants met in the offices of KCC at Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone. There the participants were given an update on the wider aims of the Planarch 2 programme to place the joint fieldwork visits in a broader context by Casper Johnson of KCC. This presentation gave details of the administration of the INTERREG III B Planarch 2 projects and illustrated the important role of the joint fieldwork exchanges as a means of sharing techniques and ideas. The presentation also reinforced the importance of the Planarch projects in achieving the primary aims:

- developing archaeological decision-making in spatial planning, to share experience and academic knowledge;
- improving best practice in reducing the impact of development on archaeology;
- investigating ways of presenting archaeology to the public.

2.1.2. This was followed by a second presentation by Stuart Cakebread of KCC. This introduced the participants to the character of the historic environment of Kent, and provided details of recent archaeological work. Including sites excavated during the construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. This was followed by an introduction to the Kent SMR outlining how the information is organised and linked. The issues raised by the Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Survey and the enhancement of coastal and marine sites in the SMR were also described.

2.1.3. Mark Dunkley of WA then gave the group a summary of the work carried out to date on the North Kent Coast Survey Project and an introduction to the week's fieldwork schedule. This introduction also gave the visiting members of the survey team a clear picture of the nature of the work to be carried out during the week.

2.1.4. The introductory session served to outline the environmental and archaeological background to the visiting survey members so they were aware of the kind of working conditions and archaeology they would be likely to encounter during the joint fieldwork with WA and the progress the north Kent coastal survey had made up to that time.

2.1.5. The group was then taken to Queenborough on the Isle of Sheppey to familiarise themselves with the workboat to be used for the survey (**Plate 1**). The participants were given a further health and safety briefing to familiarise themselves with the safety equipment to be used while travelling by boat and during the survey. The group was then shown the GeoXT and Husky survey equipment and given an introductory session in their use.

2.1.6. The group then travelled to the Fleur De Lys Heritage Centre in Faversham for a tour of the town's small museum followed by a guided tour of the

historic town. The tour was undertaken with the assistance of the Faversham Society and included in the programme as an example of the liaison which is normally undertaken with local special interest groups in advance of WA working in a particular area.

2.2. Tuesday 29th June

- 2.2.1. As low water was not until the afternoon, the field work participants were taken to Upnor Castle on the Medway. Upnor Castle was selected as a site representative of the long established military infrastructure of the Medway. The castle was built in 1559 as a gun fort to protect the warships at anchor in the Medway and the dockyard at Chatham. The choice of site also served to highlight the transnational significance of maritime and coastal sites due to its involvement in the Battle of the Medway (1667) during the Second Dutch War (1665-7). This was a Dutch attack under the command of Admiral Michiel de Ruyter, which saw many English ships destroyed at anchor in the Medway and the capture of the *Royal Charles* (Cruikshank, 2001).
- 2.2.2. Once the tide had ebbed sufficiently to reveal a suitable intertidal area, the group was taken by boat to the north of Burntwick Island to carry out survey work. The group was split into two teams led by Mark Dunkley and Brian Hession and each participant had an opportunity to use either the GeoTX or Husky survey system, and where appropriate update or create new records (**Plate 2**).
- 2.2.3. Upon completion of the day's fieldwork, the participants were taken to their accommodation at the White Horse Inn at Boughton-under-Blean, where the participants were debriefed.

2.3. Wednesday 30th June

- 2.3.1. The group was taken to Bedlam's Bottom, a large area of mudflats containing different site types. Survey work was limited by the high tide and the participants remained as a single working group. Each member of the group was given the opportunity to use either the GeoXT or Husky survey equipment and practice locating, querying and updating existing monument records. Sites observed included a Roman saltworking site and a large number of hulks (predominantly Thames barges). Site formation processes, the effects of erosion and accretion in the intertidal and coastal areas, and the problems of preliminary site characterisation and description were also discussed.
- 2.3.2. The survey work was followed by a visit to the Dolphin's Yard Sailing Barge Museum in Sittingbourne to view Thames spritsail barges under restoration and see the museum displays outlining the history and importance of this type of vernacular craft to the region. The museum visit provided context for the hulked barges seen earlier in the day.
- 2.3.3. During this visit, the group was joined by Dr. Antony Firth, Head of Coastal and Marine Projects for Wessex Archaeology, who gave the group a talk

outlining the evolution of development led archaeological projects in the United Kingdom. This was followed by an outline of the development of marine and coastal archaeology in the UK and further background information regarding the North Kent Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Survey and the role of the Planarch survey week in the completion of the rapid coastal zone work.

- 2.3.4. As the tide was ebbing in the afternoon, the group was then taken to Queenborough to assemble for more survey work on Burntwick Island. Antony Firth and Isabel Jansen then departed before the remainder of the group left for the island. Unfortunately, boat engine difficulties and the loss of an anchor meant that survey work for the remainder of the day had to be postponed.

2.4. Thursday 1st July

- 2.4.1. Andrea Otte and Liesbet Shietecatte did not participate in the day's activities as they were attending a meeting with English Heritage in Portsmouth. The remainder of the group was taken to Lower Halstow to carry out further intertidal survey along Halstow Creek, again each member of the group had an opportunity to locate and identify sites, update records and where appropriate create new records using the GeoXT and Husky survey equipment (**Plates 3**). The survey was concluded when the incoming tide covered the intertidal area to be surveyed.
- 2.4.2. The participants were taken by boat down the Swale to Conyer Creek and Fowley Island to reconnoitre the area for suitable landing places and potential hazards. The purpose of this trip was to determine if boat access would be essential in certain areas to enable them to be comprehensively surveyed. This showed the importance of careful planning in organising a coastal survey in the estuarine environment of the Swale, and the need for careful attention to issues of health and safety necessary when working from a boat and on the potentially dangerous soft muds of the intertidal zone.
- 2.4.3. The group then returned to Lower Halstow to resume the intertidal survey work on the ebb tide. The survey located what has been preliminarily identified as a two-phase Romano-British saltworking site.

2.5. Friday 2nd July

- 2.5.1. The group was taken by boat to the southern shore of Burntwick Island to examine a known extensive Romano-British saltworking and settlement site on a wide intertidal area of relatively firm mud and sands. The remains of waterlogged wood features and extensive pottery and bone scatters were identified (**Plate 4**). This trip gave the participants an insight into the wide variety of feature types that could be encountered in intertidal areas, and the effects of the tides and currents on diverse kinds of archaeological material. The changes in accessibility dictated by the tide and local conditions were made clearly evident during this trip.

- 2.5.2. The participants were then taken to the offices of the Medway Swale Estuary Partnership in the Alexander Centre, Faversham, for a final debrief and a discussion of a formal agenda of points informed by the events and activities of the survey week in Kent and the previous joint fieldwork visits. The agenda covered:
- Work of Medway and Swale Estuary Partnership;
 - Provision for coastal/wetlands management;
 - Existing provision within Sites and Monuments Records for coastal/wetlands archaeology;
 - How information held on coastal/wetlands archaeology can be improved ;
- 2.5.3. The group was joined by Lis Dyson, Paul Cuming and Casper Johnson of KCC, Deanna Groom of Wessex Archaeology and Sarah Draper, Estuary Manager of the Medway Swale Estuary Partnership.
- 2.5.4. Following the discussion of the points raised on the agenda and an analysis of the week's events some tentative plans for future joint fieldwork visits were proposed although these await confirmation. Following this meeting the survey participants departed.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1. The north Kent fieldwork was organised and planned with the aim to provide the participants with an insight into the specialised techniques, equipment and procedures used for surveying the coast and intertidal zones of the North Kent Coast. An important part of the fieldwork was to show the importance of having a boat to access areas that are otherwise unreachable.
- 3.2. The survey work being undertaken by WA is planned and equipped to allow two teams of two people to cover a large area quickly, recording and updating monuments whilst remaining safe in what can be a hazardous work environment. The joint fieldwork carried out during this session involved two WA staff working with a group of seven helpers, which resulted in two survey teams of four and five people respectively.
- 3.3. As the hand-held computers used to record and update monument records could only be used by one person at a time, this meant that when not using the computer the remaining team members participated in the walkover surveys as 'spotters'. Team members would call new sites to the attention of the surveyor with the computer, or seek out existing sites on the instructions of the team member with the computer.
- 3.4. While this approach works well with a small team of two or three people and ensures the safety of each team member, the larger team size did not seem to confer any advantage to the effectiveness of the survey. As there were only two handheld computers for monument updating and recording for the visiting fieldwork participants to use each team member did not perhaps have as much time with the handheld computer as desired.

- 3.5. The problems of the larger team size might have been overcome by simply using another handheld computer but none was available and should this solution have been implemented there were additional health and safety concerns that would have had to have been addressed before the survey could proceed.
- 3.6. The larger team size also presented difficulties as while the WA survey staff had previous experience and knowledge of the working conditions in north Kent, the visiting survey team members had none. While the visiting team members were extensively briefed and made aware of the hazards and difficulties like deep mud and rapidly rising tides, it was considered necessary to keep the team members within sight and prevent them from spreading out too far from the WA staff to ensure their safety. Hence, the area that the 'spotters' could explore on their own was restricted.
- 3.7. As only the WA staff had boat-handling training and experience the visiting survey team members were not able to try landing and launching the workboat for themselves.
- 3.8. In hindsight, for the survey work to proceed most effectively and cover the most ground, it would probably be best to maintain the survey team size of two – one member being WA staff and one member being visiting participant. This may mean that a rolling programme of two participants at a time join the field team is instigated for future joint working. As a consequence the period of exchange hosting might be extended over 3-4 weeks.
- 3.9. Conversely, one of the most important objectives for each joint fieldwork week is to encourage truly trans-national debates. Whilst the small survey team would add to the speed and effectiveness of the survey, a larger group working together can engage more actively in ad hoc discussion as the survey work progresses.
- 3.10. The survey work carried out during the week highlighted substantial differences between the methodologies used in the Kent boat-based survey work and the methodologies employed in Belgium and Holland. Discussions revealed that the Kent survey work had more in common with the methodologies employed by the participants in Essex.
- 3.11. The first marked difference apparent to the participants was the topography of the Medway. The survey area visited by the exchange group largely consisted of large expanses of deep mud, and scattered islands consisting of saltmarsh cut by extensive systems of tidal gullies. Coastlines of this type do not exist in Belgium or Holland, although it was noted that the existing Polder landscape in these countries is ultimately derived from a landscape of this kind. The participants from Belgium and Holland found it useful to see the nature of this landscape as it provided them with an example of the kind of coastal landscape that existed in their countries prior to the extensive reclamation of the land.

- 3.12. The participants also noted the problems of access encountered by the group during the week and commented on the difficulties of working around the tides in the Medway. The Belgium survey work, which has been carried out to date, has been on the dry land of the polders. Here access to the survey areas is limited only by the sowing and growing of crops. The participants from Essex were already familiar with the need to plan work around the tides to maximise the time available for useful survey work. However, the Essex team had not utilised a workboat before for their own programme.
- 3.13. The Belgian participants noted that in Flanders the aim of their survey work is to retrieve every artefact found, in particular pottery sherds so that they can be studied and their distribution can be analysed of the survey areas. In Kent and Essex, however, artefact collection is not carried out at the demonstrated level of survey although there are rare exceptions.
- 3.14. The restriction of access in certain areas because of the need for the permission of the landowner to carry out survey work was brought to the participants' attention during the week. On one day of survey when the participants were surveying the area around Bedlam's Bottom the survey teams were restricted to the footpaths, as the landowner of part of the area could not be identified.
- 3.15. As well as this, a landowner who was met during the course of the survey, while helpful, was reluctant to grant permission to leave the established footpath to carry out a more complete survey. As a result much of the surveying in this area was limited to updating existing monument records where they were visible. Even this activity was constrained at times by the inability to get close enough to the monument to make any more than a general observation that the monument was seen and still existed. Similar incidents during the survey work in Flanders and Essex were resolved quite quickly and did not obstruct the survey in any significant way.
- 3.16. Recording the position of sites using GPS technology had not previously been used by the visiting participants from Belgium and Holland. However this method of plotting sites was not considered to be any more advantageous to their work as much of their survey area is easily accessible using traditional paper mapping.
- 3.17. The practice of downloading the relevant section of the existing SMR onto a handheld computer with GIS software so that new records could be added and existing records amended was seen as highly advantageous. The ability to then upload these new and amended record directly back into the Kent SMR was also seen as useful. The main advantages noted by the participants is the ease with which existing monuments can be located and their records amended, and the large areas that could be covered in a relatively short time with the portable computers linked to GPS.
- 3.18. The lack of a facility to obtain accurate height data for sites during the rapid survey was noted as one potential area for improvement with the portable GPS system. Height data was suggested as a useful way of establishing

relative dates for sites (based on models of sea-level rise) across a wide area. This shortcoming has been noted and WA is considering how the gathering of this data might be incorporated into further fieldwork.

- 3.19. Surveying in the intertidal zone demonstrated to the participants the many difficulties in carrying out such work. For example, there can be large variations in the visibility of sites or artefacts due to sand, mud or seaweed cover. An area blanketed with seaweed one day can be totally exposed the next, which could lead to surveyors missing new monuments or failing to identify and amend existing monuments.
- 3.20. The ability of coastal processes such as erosion and accretion to change the landscape of the Medway and Swale in quite short time frames was again something the visiting participants from Belgium and Holland had not anticipated. High rates of erosion in north Kent could result in new sites becoming exposed once areas have already been surveyed. Another possible situation could see newly exposed sites added to the record being destroyed before they can be adequately identified or revisited. The accretion of sediments raised the problem of sites becoming buried and “disappearing” from view. In contrast, the coastlines of Belgium and Holland consist largely of well-defended high seawalls or dunes with broad sandy intertidal zones. Rapid and dramatic changes to the coast are uncommon.
- 3.21. The changing nature of the Kent and Essex coasts when compared to the comparatively static coastlines of Belgium and Holland raised the topic of shoreline management plans. In Belgium and Holland, countries where the reclamation of saltmarsh and low-lying coastal land has been carried out for centuries, the need to maintain dykes and seawalls has traditionally been the mainstay of shoreline management. While Kent has seen some significant land reclamation in the past (nothing on the scale of Belgium and Holland though), Kent’s management of the coast has allowed seawalls to be breached and areas have been allowed to return to intertidal environments.
- 3.22. The extant and breached seawalls of Kent were noted in this discussion not only in terms of their role in shoreline management but also as monuments in their own right. North Kent’s sea walls can date from the Medieval period and hence are archaeologically significant. A parallel was noted here with a large defensive dyke in Flanders dating to the 1390s, this topographic feature still requires a structural and topographical survey. The need to balance the requirements of sustainable coastline management with the preservation of the manmade landscape is an issue that may become increasingly relevant to the Belgian and Dutch project partners should any change to their shoreline management policy be considered.
- 3.23. The topography of Belgium and Holland, well known as the ‘Low Countries’, has not perhaps lent itself to a similar approach to shoreline management. The participants from Belgium did note that managed realignment, in the form of managed retreat on quite a small scale, has very recently been put into practice there near Nieuwport. Similar management of

the shoreline is not known in Holland, although there are management plans for rivers, devised as a part of flood control.

- 3.24. Participants from Belgium and Holland found it useful to work in the coastal landscape of north Kent as it is similar to the landscape that existed in their countries prior to the extensive reclamation of the land. At present in Flanders, there are very few small and scattered areas of saltmarsh (such as the Zwin) where intertidal methodologies developed in north Kent and Essex might be employed, but throughout the work in north Kent the participants were able to see and interpret this kind of landscape and use it as an example to inform their understanding of the evolution of their own coasts.
- 3.25. It was noted that during the survey the recording of wrecks and hulks raised the question of the value of shipwrecks and hulks. It was noted how wreck sites and hulk sites had an assemblage value that contributed to telling the story of the landscape that contrasted with their individual value. This aspect was of interest to the participants as in Holland archaeological debate is particularly focussed at present on landscapes and how they were used. This raised the question of how to move from producing point data identifying individual wrecksites to a broader holistic map that integrates their contribution to the historic landscape character. In Holland it was noted that planners now wish to know about the wider historic landscape rather than individual sites when they seek archaeological information.
- 3.26. As noted in the May 2004 Planarch report (Wessex Archaeology, 2004: 7) the present Flanders fieldwork concentrates on the survey of the Polders behind the coastal sand dunes. It was suggested during the earlier joint fieldwork sessions that this kind of fieldwork could be extended to the intertidal zone and that the methodologies and techniques used for coastal work in north Kent and Essex could be useful for such an extension to the project. This was acknowledged during the course of the fieldwork, but the present deep sandy beaches that characterise much of the Belgian coast beyond the dunes and seawalls would make spotting archaeological remains very difficult as any surviving sites would be deeply buried. Notwithstanding this difficulty should any attempts be made to extend the survey into the intertidal zone, the methodologies employed in the intertidal surveys in the UK would provide a useful basis upon which to develop a project design.
- 3.27. The question of integrating sensitive sediments or geological indicators of archaeological potential into the existing Kent SMR structure was explored in discussion. According to KCC the existing SMR is very much monument orientated. Nevertheless, KCC have been giving some thought to the inclusion of geological indicators in HBSMR and as GIS layers. The absence of a thesaurus to allow geological indicators to be consistently defined in the SMR was also identified as a problem. In addition to this the need to record sediments as having potential significance even where no obvious archaeology has been located was raised.
- 3.28. The recording of sediments or other environmental indicators has not been undertaken within the Belgian Central Archaeological Inventory (CAI). This

was identified as an area for possible co-operation under the auspices of the Planarch project.

- 3.29. In the Netherlands, the development of predictive models has been undertaken and there is particularly good coverage for the river dunes or *donken*. Information about sediments and geological deposits with archaeological potential is available, although this information is stored in geological institutes rather than in the National Archaeological Service. The Dutch National Archaeological Service (ROB) receives digital predictive models of sediments from these institutes, however these do not seem to be integrated into recording within the Dutch national inventory, the ROB use these models in digital form as a layer but not the data behind them.
- 3.30. The discussion of predictive models led to the subject of the upcoming pilot deposit modelling survey. In Kent it is to carry out boreholing and geophysics along a transect from dry land, through reclaimed land and then offshore. It is hoped to use commercial data if it can be accessed. The goal is to create a section across the sediment sequence and if possible produce a predictive model of the sediment sequence across a certain area. This model would be useful for development control purposes as it could predict where significant archaeological remains may occur in the sediment sequences. As the deposit model is created it is planned to test its accuracy through development control work. This work could include searching for indicators such as charcoal within the sediment sequence as is done in the Netherlands. It was noted that in the Netherlands there are now broadly similar projects examining the use of chemical indicators in the sediment sequence to enhance the predictive model.
- 3.31. The exchange week also saw a great deal of discussion regarding matters concerning health and safety. The significant issues in this regard included working safely from a boat, around a tidal regime and on deep soft mud. The exchange brought a greater awareness to some participants regarding the need for comprehensive risk assessments. The precautions required to avoid becoming cut off by rising tides if on foot or stranded by falling tides if on a boat were highlighted as were the hazards of working near and sometimes on deep soft mud. The need for competence in boat handling and the ability to use VHF radio to communicate with the coastguard were all demonstrated during the week.
- 3.32. It was anticipated that the joint field survey would offer the opportunity for the Planarch fieldwork participants to undertake boat-based survey in the coastal zone. This would allow Planarch 2 participants to have experienced (coastal) wetland survey above high water (Flanders), intertidal work (Essex) and maritime survey (North Kent).

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1. The exchange of field personnel in north Kent has brought together a transnational network of (coastal) wetland specialists who have had the opportunity to work together. Information on field methodologies,

archaeological management and academic knowledge was exchanged both formally and informally amongst the participants.

- 4.2. The differences in the present day coastlines of Belgium, Holland, Essex and Kent were particularly noticed by the participants. There are no readily identifiable parallels with the mudflats that characterise much of the North Kent coast as the Belgian and Dutch coastline consists predominantly of wide sandy beaches in front of large sand dunes inland of which there is a broad expanse of Polders. The Polders consist of low-lying tracts of land that require extensive drainage channels. The large estuary system of the Medway and Swale with its low lying and scattered islands was a new working environment for the Belgian and Dutch participants, however the methods used to survey the area were recognised as having applications beyond the specific environment of the estuaries and coastal marshes.
- 4.3. While the fieldwork carried out by the participants was very different in each region, participants have in almost all cases considered a review of their current field survey practices. No radical changes have been made to existing projects, but a willingness to use new survey methods has been considered by some participants and these are likely to be put into practice and tested in forthcoming work.
- 4.4. Two days of a five-day working week were given over to introductory meetings and end of week discussion. While these sessions were necessary and are certainly essential to the Planarch project meeting its aims, the time lost on the remaining three survey days due to unsuitable tides, an engine failure and the loss of an anchor meant that less ground was covered than was anticipated.
- 4.5. The survey techniques used in Flanders and Essex on previous joint fieldwork sessions have not required the same degree of briefing, technical training, and development of enhanced health and safety awareness. The time available for survey was further curtailed by the increased journey times necessary to transport an additional seven people in the workboat (e.g. the heavier load reduces the speed capable through the water, also the smaller clearance draft of the vessel reduces the landing places available).
- 4.6. Due to these problems it is suggested that consideration might be given to hosting a much smaller number of people rotated over a longer period. Problems such as engine failure and unfavourable tidal conditions can be more easily resolved over a longer fieldwork session without the loss of overall productivity. The experience for each participant in the Kent fieldwork could be made more 'one-to-one' in this way. Although it is understood that one of the most important objectives for the joint fieldwork is to encourage debate and the sharing of the ideas and methods by the partner organisations best accomplished within a larger group.
- 4.7. Despite the curtailed survey time and unforeseen problems encountered during the Planarch fieldwork session, several new monuments were recorded. The new monuments are summarised in the table below.

| Pref Ref | Name | Description | NGR |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|--|------------------|
| TQ 96 NW 1119 | Wooden barge | Fragmented remains of wooden barge or vessel. | 591995 165459 |
| TQ 87 SW 1105 | Post Medieval building material | Extensive deposit of either decayed post-medieval ceramic building material, or fragmentary briquetage | 580829 170677 |
| TQ 87 SE 1204 | Wreck | Composite vessel with iron knees | 586531 172742 |
| TQ 86 NE 1143 | Saltworks | Two distinct phases of salt working activity, later phase being Romano-British. | 586491 167909 |
| TQ 87 SE 1201 | Gun battery | Battery, circular in plan, with steel fittings. Concrete. | 586622 172866 |
| TQ 87 SE 1199 | Gun battery | Collapsed octagonal battery, steel fittings, power cables visible | 586639 172743 |
| TQ 87 SE 1200 | Gun battery | Collapsed battery | 586665 172744 |
| TQ 86 NE 1141 | Saltworks | Roman saltworking site | 589266 168959 |
| TQ 86 NE 1142 | Flint scatter | Burnt and worked flint on clay foreshore | 586417 167853 |
| TQ 87 SE 1202 | Gun battery | Battery, partly collapsed concrete, with steel fittings | 586606 172742 |

Table 1. New monuments recorded during the Planarch joint fieldwork survey

4.8. Updated monument records are summarised in the table below.

| Pref Ref | Name | Description | NGR |
|-----------------|---|---|------------------|
| TQ 87 SE 55 | Mooring Dolphin. | Dolphin seen but no significant changes deemed necessary to the existing description. | 586515 172763 |
| TQ 87 SE 1142 | South Boom Battery | Site noted in 2004. | 586548 172708 |
| TQ 87 SE 1137 | Buildings in enclosure | Seen in 2004. The site comprises an iron shed, chimney, and picket fence. | 586533 172694 |
| TQ 86 NE 11 | Chipping floor/Mesolithic, Lower Halstow | Site visited in 2004, some abraded flints found in the vicinity. | 586330 167700 |
| TQ 86 NE 1140 | Structure of wooden stakes of unknown function. | Site seen in 2004 | 586528 167916 |
| TQ 86 NE 83 | Sirdar | Barge seen in 2004. In a poor condition, site being encroached by saltmarsh. | 589241 168967 |

| Pref Ref | Name | Description | NGR |
|-----------------|---|---|------------------|
| TQ 77 SE 91 | Remains of an unidentified barge | No visible remains in 2004 may have been buried or removed. | 577740 171210 |
| TQ 86 NE 1035 | Remains of two unidentified vessels, Lower Halstow. | Site seen in 2004, site comprises two vessels; one is more coherent than the other, one of the end posts is visible along with the keels. | 586064 167518 |

Table 2. Monuments updated during the Planarch joint fieldwork survey

- 4.9. The Flanders, Essex and Kent exchanges provided an opportunity for wetland specialists to assist in existing field work projects in participating countries rather than just observe the methods used. By joining existing and ongoing projects, participants were able to contribute valuable expertise and in turn learn more from established project methodologies. This hands on approach allowed the participants to assess more critically methodologies in use in other countries and gauge how well if at all they might be applied to their own work.
- 4.10. The practical work participation element of the exchange has informed the participants of ways to develop their existing projects to encompass a broader range of coastal environments and in particular has made them aware of the technical and other difficulties that may be encountered in extending the range of their work.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Centrale Archaeologische Inventaris, 2004, *De opbouw van een archeologisch beleidsinstrument*, Instituut voor het Archeologisch Patrimonium - Rapporten 14, Brussels.

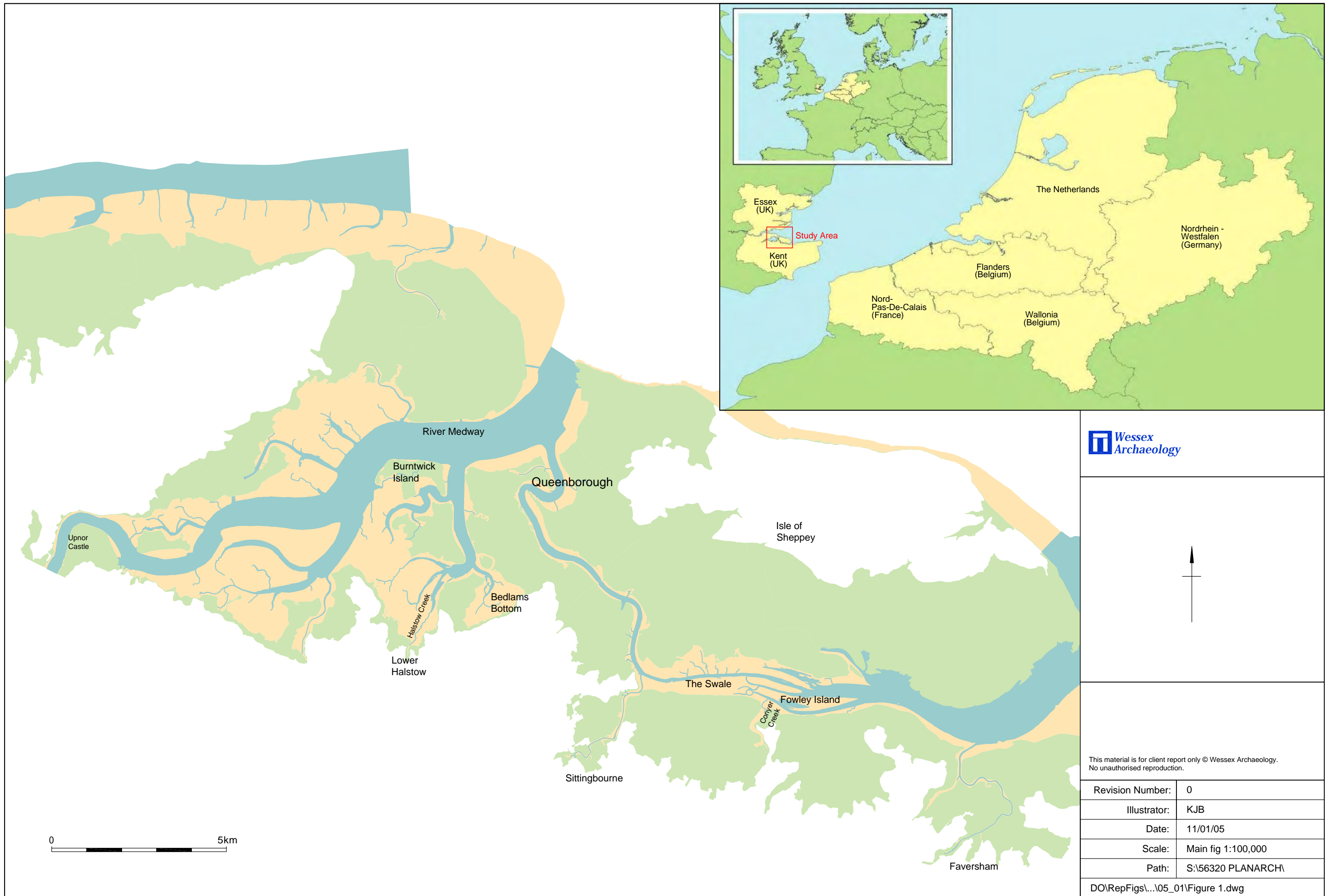
Cruikshank, D., 2001, *Invasion: Defending Britain from Attack*.

Instituut voor het Archeologisch Patrimonium, *From Saltmarsh to Battlefield: An exploration of the landscape of Testerep, Leffinge and Oostende from the early Middle Ages to the Siege of Oostende (1601-1604)*, Guidebook

Various, 2000, *Current Archaeology*, May 2000, No. 168, Vol. XIV, No 12.

Wessex Archaeology, 2004, *NKC Planarch Participation Flanders and Essex Exchange Visits Spring 2004*, unpublished report for Kent County Council, Ref: 56320.01

Wilkinson, T. J. & Murphy, P. L., 1995, *Archaeology of the Essex Coast, Volume I: The Hullbridge Survey*, East Anglian Archaeology Report No. 71



The geographic scope of the Planarch 2 areas and the north Kent fieldwork study area

Figure 1



Plate 1: View of the workboat used during the exchange week on Burntwick Island.



Plate 2: Exchange participants familiarising themselves with the GeoXT and Husky survey units.



Plate 3: Exchange participants surveying near Lower Halstow.



Plate 4: Exchange participants visiting a Romano-British site on Stangate Creek.



THE TRUST FOR WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY LTD.

Head Office: Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB.

Tel: 01722 326867 Fax: 01722 337562 info@wessexarch.co.uk www.wessexarch.co.uk

London Office: Unit 701, The Chandlery, 50 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7QY.

Tel: 020 7953 7494 Fax: 020 7953 7499 london-info@wessexarch.co.uk www.wessexarch.co.uk



If you would like this document in a different format, please contact
our Customer Services department:
Telephone: 0870 333 1181
Fax: 01793 414926
Textphone: 01793 414878
E-mail: customers@english-heritage.org.uk