The Past from the Ploughzone: Understanding the Meaning of Ploughzone Scatters of Pottery and Metalwork and their Application to Landscape History in East Suffolk, *c*. AD 250-1350

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Abstract

Artefacts recovered from the plough soil were once widely used by landscape historians and archaeologists to understand settlement and landscape change from prehistory to the present day. More recently, however, the use of this evidence has been eclipsed by more fashionable archaeological techniques such as geophysics. This thesis reasserts the validity of fieldwalking and metal detecting as archaeological survey techniques, particularly when employed together as part of a 'blended methodology'.

A new methodology for understanding scatters of pottery and metalwork recovered from the plough soil is developed, systematically incorporating fieldwalking and metal detecting assemblages together into a single study for the first time. Through previously unpublished case study, it is demonstrated that fieldwalking and metal detecting offer differing, but complementary, insight into historic activities and processes that can be used to understand historic settlement and agriculture.

This methodology is used to explore the development of settlement, agriculture and society in 37 parishes in East Suffolk from the later Roman period to the end of the High Middle Ages (*c.* AD 250-1350). Using high quality, previously unpublished fieldwalking data from the 'Survey in the Deben Valley' and metalwork scatters from the Portable Antiquities Scheme, patterns of continuity and change in the landscape and settlement pattern of the study area are interrogated and new insight into the development of the countryside is offered. Recurrent subregional variations in manuring strategies are identified, arguably the result of long-term, environmentally structured patterns of landscape exploitation and livestock husbandry, while the importance of the natural environment in structuring settlement location and form, as well as in influencing social differencing is highlighted. The importance of these patterns for understanding the development of the landscape of East Anglia, and indeed England more widely, is laid out in the final chapters.

This thesis thus develops a novel framework for understanding fieldwalking and metal detecting datasets and shines new light on the interpretation of past landscapes from the ploughzone.

List of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

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Abbreviations

DVSA	Deben Valley Survey Archive
Height ASL	Height Above Sea Level
HER	Historic Environment Record
L&L Finds Catalogue	'Summary Catalogue of Metal-detected Finds from the Rendlesham Survey, Lordship and Landscape in East Anglia AD 400-800: Digital Appendices,' https://doi.org/10.5284/1083483.
L&L Image Database	'Early Medieval Metal-detected Finds Figures, Lordship and Landscape in East Anglia AD 400-800: Digital Appendices', https://doi.org/10.5284/1083483. Images reproduced under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License. Images have been cropped.
PAS	Portable Antiquities Scheme
SCCAS	Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service

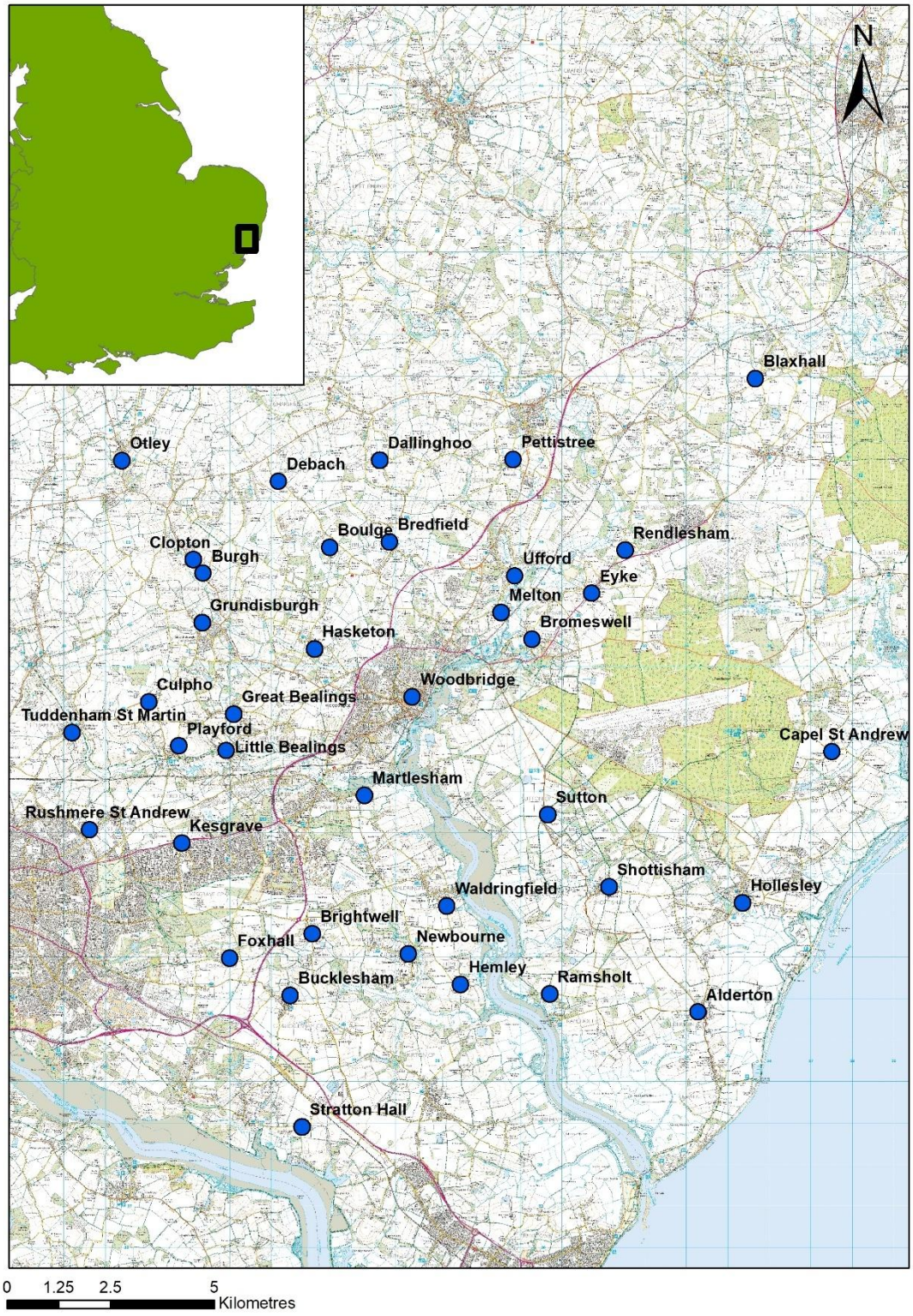

Figure 0.1: The principal places mentioned in the text.

Introduction

Fieldwalking involves the systematic collection of historic artefacts from the surface of arable fields in order to understand patterns of settlement and landscape exploitation in the past. These artefacts, primarily ceramics and lithics, but including other material, such as metalwork and bone, have been removed from their original archaeological context and dispersed by the action of cultivation. Once recovered, the material is processed and plotted on a map or survey grid to identify patterns of historic settlement, agriculture and industrial activity.

Emerging from greater awareness of the importance of past spatial relationships, fieldwalking was developed as a technique of archaeological investigation in Britain in the 1970s and 1980s.[1] This technique has been widely employed to understand the development of the landscape from prehistory to the post-medieval period, with scatters of pottery from the plough soil coming to underpin much of current understanding of the historic landscape.[2] Much of recent debate surrounding Late Saxon and High Medieval settlement change, for example, is based upon the results of fieldwalking, while discussion of arable farming in the period before the proliferation of documentary sources in the thirteenth century relies upon the evidence of ambiguous ceramic 'manuring scatters'. Indeed, such was the number of settlement sites uncovered after the widespread adoption of fieldwalking in the 1970s and 1980s that Christopher Taylor described the archaeological material recovered from arable fields as a 'quantitative explosion', enabling hitherto impossible confidence in the location of historic settlement.[3] While a small number of field surveys underpin much of current landscape research, few fieldwalking surveys have been undertaken as part of research projects in recent years, with the systematic recovery of pottery from the plough soil eclipsed by 'more fashionable' survey techniques such as geophysics, while the debate surrounding the interpretation of ploughzone pottery scatters has similarly declined.[4]

While fieldwalking surveys have influenced current understanding of the past, the results of metal detecting have been the subject of much less academic attention. Metal detecting involves searching the landscape, usually arable fields, with a metal detector to recover historic

[1] Vincent L. Gaffney and Martin Tingle, *The Maddle Farm Project: An Integrated Survey of Prehistoric and Roman Landscapes on the Berkshire Downs* (British Archaeological Reports, 1989), 1.
[2] Alan Davison, *The Evolution of Settlement in Three Parishes in South-East Norfolk* (East Anglian Archaeology, 1990).
[3] Christopher Taylor, 'Roman Settlements in the Nene Valley: The Impact of Recent Archaeology', in *Recent Work in Rural Archaeology*, ed. P. J. Fowler (Rowman and Littlefield, 1975), 107.
[4] Christopher Scull et al., eds, *Lordship and Landscape in East Anglia AD 400-800: The Royal Centre at Rendlesham, Suffolk, and Its Contexts* (Society of Antiquaries of London, 2024), 67.

metalwork. This material is recovered both as part of archaeological investigations or, more often, during 'hobby' metal detecting. While only metalwork is recovered by metal detectors, other cultural artefacts such as pottery are also occasionally recovered from the surface of the plough soil while metal detecting. Again, these artefacts have, when recovered from arable fields, often been divorced from their archaeological context by cultivation.

Metal detecting developed as a hobby in the 1960s and its popularity rapidly grew. Indeed, some 180,000 metal detectorists were active in the early 1980s,[5] although more recent estimates suggest that there are currently around 10,000 metal detectorists active in the UK.[6] As metal detecting proliferated, resistance against the hobby grew, manifested in the Stop Taking Our Past campaign that was largely driven by the Council for British Archaeology. This movement argued that metal detectorists were doing irreversible damage to the archaeological record, with detectorists removing vast quantities of material from the plough soil into private collections where it is not available for academic study.[7] While the use of metal detectors in archaeological research is growing, metal detecting remains controversial, with academics such as Paul Barford vehemently arguing against metal detecting, particularly when carried out by amateur detectorists.[8]

Others have taken a more pragmatic approach to metal detecting, however.[9] Realising the value of the datasets provided by metal detectorists, Tony Gregory and Barbara Green fostered positive relations with the local metal detecting community in East Anglia, recording finds of archaeological material recovered by amateur detectorists. Such work had much success, and the material recovered was slowly integrated into academic studies of the past.[10] Despite the animosity between metal detectorists and archaeologists in some areas, it was increasingly recognised that amateur detectorists, and the archaeological material they recovered, had the potential to contribute to understanding of the historic landscape. Due to this, as well as the

[5] Katherine Robbins, 'From Past to Present: Understanding the Impact of Sampling Bias on Data Recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Southampton, 2012), 7.
[6] Roger Bland, 'The Development and Future of the Treasure Act and Portable Antiquities Scheme', in *Metal Detecting and Archaeology*, ed. Suzie Thomas and Peter Stone (Boydell Press, 2009), 71.
[7] Robbins, 'Past to Present', 7.
[8] Paul Barford, 'Archaeology, Collectors and Preservation: a Reply to David Gill', *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 20 (2010); Paul Barford, 'Artefact Collecting: Creating or Destroying the Archaeological Record?', *Folia Praehistorica Posnaniensia* 25 (2020): 39–91.
[9] Barbara Green and Tony Gregory, 'An Initiative in the Use of Metal Detectors in Norfolk', *Museums Journal* 77 (1977): 161–62.
[10] For early use of unsystematic metal detecting data, see D. Gurney, 'Small Towns and Villages of Roman Norfolk. the Evidence of Surface and Metal-Detector Finds', in *Roman Small Towns in Eastern England and Beyond*, ed. Anthony Ernest Brown (Oxbow Books, 1995).

spread of metal detecting as a hobby, a uniform, nationwide approach to the recording of metal detecting data was established, and a pilot scheme was devised in five areas of England. This pilot project was developed into the nationwide Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS). Through this initiative, material recovered by metal detectorists and members of the public more widely is recorded by a network of Finds Liaison Officers (FLOs). This data is stored on a central database that can be accessed by researchers and integrated into archaeological research projects.[11]

While fieldwalking underpins much of current understanding of settlement patterns and arable farming, the use of metal detecting datasets to understand the past has, until recently, been limited. While it has been widely recognised that metalwork scatters recorded with the PAS have the potential to revolutionise understanding of the historic countryside, this information has rarely been integrated into landscape-focussed studies, in part owing to a lack of clarity regarding the association between metalwork and historic activity at a local scale. It is this relationship that this thesis aims to interrogate.

It has tentatively been suggested, but not proven, that fieldwalking and metal detecting may offer differing insights into past activities.[12] Yet, scatters of pottery and metalwork from the plough soil have not been incorporated into a single study to date, again due to limited understanding of the historic and taphonomic processes that have resulted in the formation of ploughzone scatters. This thesis systematically integrates fieldwalking and metal detecting datasets into a single study for the first time. Through a previously unpublished case study of Rendlesham, Suffolk, a new methodology to understand the past using ploughzone archaeological datasets is developed, before this is applied to a wider study area of 37 parishes in East Suffolk to interrogate landscape change from *c.* AD 250-1350.

Chapter One introduces fieldwalking and metal detecting as archaeological survey techniques. Chapter Two analyses the association between fieldwalking and metal detecting datasets and historic settlement and agriculture, developing a new methodology to incorporate *both* pottery and metalwork scatters into a single study to enable full interpretation of historic settlement and activity.

This methodology is then applied to previously unpublished datasets in an environmentally diverse study area to challenge, confirm and nuance current understanding of the historic landscape of the study area, and East Anglia more widely. The previously unpublished datasets

[11] Over 1.8 million individual artefacts have been recorded by the PAS as of 08/04/2025. For the development of the PAS, see Robbins, 'Past to Present', 5–21.
[12] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 67–72.

upon which the following analysis is based, as well as the methodology and site definition thresholds are set out in Chapter Three. Chapter Four introduces the landscape of the study area and sets out current understanding of the development of the East Suffolk landscape, contextualising this against the wider historiography of the East Anglian countryside while also highlighting those areas of understanding that remain to be resolved. The results of this new, 'blended methodology' are set out chronologically in Chapters Five, Six, Seven, Eight and Nine, before the wider implications of this methodology and long-term patterns of continuity manifested in the ploughzone are interrogated in Chapter Ten. The concluding chapter brings the results of the study together and reasserts the value of such a 'blended approach'.

Chapter One: Fieldwalking and Metal Detecting: Problems and Possibilities

After its widespread adoption in the later twentieth century, large scale fieldwalking surveys were extensively employed to explore the landscape of England from prehistory to the present day. Such surveys yielded valuable results, coming to underpin much of current understanding of the historic landscape. Conversely, while metal detecting is widely carried out by hobbyists, the integration of data from metal detectorists into studies of the historic landscape has been slow. Although the use of metal detectors within archaeological research has grown, the PAS represents one of the most underutilised datasets in landscape history, despite the potential of this data to revolutionise understanding of the historic landscape.

Both fieldwalking and metal detecting, although not without limitations, have much to contribute to the study of past landscapes. The results of these survey techniques have not, however, been systematically integrated into a single study, due to a lack of understanding of the activities represented in these datasets. Through a previously unpublished case study, a method to integrate the results of these survey techniques will be developed in Chapter Two. Before this is possible, however, the problems and possibilities inherent in each of these methodologies must be set out. It is this that forms the subject of the present chapter.

Fieldwalking as a Technique of Archaeological Research

Although fieldwalking methodologies have been widely employed, the validity of this survey technique has been debated.[13] While some have strongly argued for the importance of fieldwalking datasets,[14] others have taken a more nuanced approach, challenging the accuracy of fieldwalking methodologies and questioning the relationship between scatters of material in the plough soil and subsurface archaeology.[15] This debate has, however, petered out in recent years, owing to the decline of fieldwalking as an archaeological survey technique.

[13] Colin Haselgrove et al., eds, *Archaeology from the Ploughsoil: Studies in the Collection and Interpretation of Field Survey Data* (University of Sheffield, 1985).
[14] Andrew Rogerson, *Fransham: People and Land in a Central Norfolk Parish from the Palaeolithic to the Eve of Parliamentary Enclosure* (East Anglian Archaeology, 2022), 8–10.
[15] Colin Haselgrove, 'Inference from Ploughsoil Artefact Samples', in *Archaeology from the Ploughsoil: Studies in the Collection and Interpretation of Field Survey Data*, ed. Colin Haselgrove et al. (University of Sheffield, 1985), 9.

Much of the debate regarding the employment of fieldwalking surrounds the accuracy of the various methodologies employed.[16] A universal survey methodology does not exist; indeed, one of the strengths of fieldwalking is that it can be adapted to answer various research questions. The use of conflicting methodologies, even within the same archaeological investigation, has, however, caused sizeable issues in the interpretation of fieldwalking data, particularly when attempting to compare the results of differing surveys. [17]

One fieldwalking methodology employed is line walking, often utilised for preliminary surveys or to explore large areas of the landscape. Here, arable fields are divided into transects, usually spaced 5-30m apart.[18] Each transect is divided into stints of a set length, within which all material is placed into a single bag for processing and plotting together. This method allows large areas of the countryside to be investigated relatively rapidly and offers insight into the basic patterns of past settlement and landscape exploitation. The efficacy of line walking has, however, been called into question. The large spacing between transects can result in the subtleties of the landscape being overlooked, particularly in periods characterised by scarce and friable ceramics. Iron Age and Early Anglo-Saxon settlements often are spatially restricted, with scatters of ploughzone pottery of this date often being smaller than 30m and marked by few sherds.[19] Wide transect spacings as employed in some surveys may overlook such sites and, therefore, underestimate settlement densities.

More intensive fieldwalking methodologies are, however, available. Many fieldwalking surveys have employed a grid method, with arable fields divided into grids, usually ranging from 5m-50m.[20] Each grid is divided into transects or walked for a set period, with all material recovered placed together for identification, analysis and plotting. Such methodologies often recover larger quantities of archaeological material that can be plotted to a greater level of accuracy

[16] Nigel Mills, 'Sample Bias, Regional Analysis and Fieldwalking in British Archaeology', in *Archaeology from the Ploughsoil: Studies in the Collection and Interpretation of Field Survey Data*, ed. Colin Haselgrove et al. (University of Sheffield, 1985), 43–46.
[17] Davison employed varying transect spacings depending on whether a field proved productive on initial examination. See Davison, 'Three Parishes in South-East Norfolk', 10.
[18] For surveys using varied transect spacing, see R. E. Yarwood, 'The Organisation and Purpose of Fieldwalking in West Yorkshire', in *Fieldwalking as a Method of Archaeological Research*, ed. Colin Hayfield (Department of the Environment, 1980); Glenn Foard, 'The Recovery of Archaeological Information by Systematic Fieldwalking: Research in Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire', in *Fieldwalking as a Method of Archaeological Research*, ed. Colin Hayfield (Department of the Environment, 1980), 35–37.
[19] David Hall, 'Settlement Patterns and Field Systems Discovered by Fieldwalking', in *Fieldwalking as a Method of Archaeological Research*, ed. Colin Hayfield (Department of the Environment, 1980), 9.
[20] Andrew Rogerson et al., *Barton Bendish and Caldecote, Fieldwork in South-West Norfolk*, no. 80 (East Anglian Archaeology, 1997), 2.

compared to line walking, enabling, in theory at least, a more subtle view into past settlements and landscapes. Employing this methodology is, however, incredibly time consuming, requiring more time to both lay out the survey grid as well as carry out the intensive fieldwork. Due to changing agricultural practices, the window in which arable fields are available for fieldwalking is shortening. Such issues can, therefore, limit opportunities to employ such time-consuming methodologies.[21]

Fieldwalking: Problems and Possibilities

While fieldwalking methodologies have been much discussed, the interpretation of fieldwalking datasets proves controversial. It has widely been suggested that dense scatters of pottery may be interpreted as evidence of settlement presence or proximity; such concentrations have often been described as 'sites', although the use of this term remains debated.[22] While many have focussed on these sites, fieldwalking also 'offers a means of documenting some of the many human activities which took place beyond the domestic habitation', particularly the manuring of arable fields;[23] such activities are poorly represented by other archaeological survey techniques. Many arable fields produce low density pottery scatters, largely from the Roman, medieval and post-medieval period, the result of manuring, with domestic waste discarded with manure and spread on arable fields to restore fertility after intensive cropping.[24] As the density of these scatters may be correlated with the intensity of arable farming, these 'manuring scatters' offer significant insight into past land use.

Fieldwalking also enables the interpretation of past activity in areas of the landscape in which other widely utilised archaeological techniques cannot. Much of academic understanding of prehistoric and Roman settlement patterns, was, before the widespread adoption of fieldwalking, based upon the results of aerial photography.[25] Although effective on lighter soils, cropmarks are difficult to discern on heavier clays.[26] This lack of investigation in these areas led

[21] Michael Fradley, 'Methods in Medieval Archaeology', in *The Oxford Handbook of Later Medieval Archaeology in Britain*, ed. Christopher Gerrard and Alejandra Gutiérrez (Oxford University Press, 2018), 23.
[22] Tom Williamson, 'Site, Settlement, Landscape: Some Reflections on Fieldwalking in Eastern England', in *Looking at the Land: Archaeological Landscapes in Eastern England - Recent Work and Future Directions*, ed. Michael Parker Pearson and R. T. Schadla-Hall (Leicestershire Museums, 1994).
[23] Haselgrove, 'Ploughsoil Artefact Samples', 7.
[24] Such scatters have been identified by Davison and Foard in Davison, *South-East Norfolk*, 32; Glenn Foard, 'Systematic Fieldwalking and the Investigation of Saxon Settlement in Northamptonshire', *World Archaeology* 9 (1978): 367.
[25] Taylor, 'Roman Settlements in the Nene Valley', 109–10.
[26] Taylor, 'Roman Settlements in the Nene Valley', 111.

to biases in assumptions regarding the distribution of settlement, with gravel terraces viewed as the most intensively exploited areas of the landscape, while areas of heavy clay soil were, until comparatively recently, argued to have been largely unoccupied until the Late Saxon period.[27] These biases were, however, corrected by fieldwalking surveys which revealed hitherto unrecognised occupation and exploitation throughout the countryside.[28] While restricted to arable fields, fieldwalking offers opportunities to understand historic activity in geological contexts not conducive to other survey techniques.

Fieldwalking also enables the definition of site chronologies in a way not possible using techniques such as geophysical surveys. While geophysical surveys can identify subsurface features in a way not possible using fieldwalking alone, this technique does not provide clear dating evidence, particularly for undiagnostic features such as field ditches. Fieldwalking often recovers chronologically diagnostic material that can, however, provide a tentative chronology for activity on any given site. While geophysical survey remains a useful methodology through which subsurface features can be understood, fieldwalking can allow the results of geophysics to be contextualised and refined.

There are, however, sizeable issues in the employment and interpretation of the results of fieldwalking surveys. At a most basic level, the use of fieldwalking to explore the historic landscape is inhibited by the relatively limited range of activities represented in scatters of pottery in the plough soil. The use of pottery was largely restricted to the domestic setting, excepting the use of ceramics in funerary deposits. Scatters of pottery are, therefore, predominantly related to activities that took place in the household and the waste this produced. It is widely accepted that ceramic scatters largely derive from four taphonomic pathways: settlement, the dumping of waste in middens, the spreading of ceramic laden manure across arable fields to restore fertility and funerary deposits. While pottery scatters offer insight into each of these activities, activities in the wider landscape, such as livestock husbandry, warfare and commerce are poorly represented in fieldwalking assemblages; scatters of pottery recovered from the plough soil evidently do not provide comprehensive understanding of all activities that took place in the past.

Furthermore, fieldwalking often offers little indication of the wealth and status of the subsurface deposit from which it was recovered, particularly for the Anglo-Saxon period. While high-status

[27] Foard, 'Recovery of Archaeological Information', 34.
[28] Davison, *South-East Norfolk*; Tom Williamson, 'The Roman Countryside: Settlement and Agriculture in N. W. Essex', *Britannia* 15 (1984): 225–30.

Romano-British sites can be identified by fine ceramics such as Samian ware or building material such as hypocaust tiles, the handmade pottery characteristic of Early Saxon settlement sites was relatively ubiquitous at all levels of the social scale. Similar problems are apparent throughout the Middle and Late Saxon periods, in which Ipswich and Thetford ware were widely used within society. While such ubiquity has clear benefits, implying that pottery scatters may identify sites of all status, fieldwalking does not, unlike metal detecting, allow the relative wealth and status of a site to be accurately gauged. Such issues will be considered further in Chapter Two.

Although pottery scatters enable site chronologies to be established, such notions should not be over-extended; the relative ambiguity of ceramic sequences in Britain prevents, in many cases, precise dates from being assigned to particular features, with the use of many pottery types spanning long periods. While fieldwalking enables the formation of broad site chronologies, the long date range of many ceramic types characteristic of English fieldwalking assemblages limits the possibilities for closely dating patterns of settlement change.

Fieldwalking surveys are also subject to numerous biases. The sample recovered by fieldwalking varies greatly depending on the worker conducting the survey, for example, with more experienced fieldwalkers recovering artefacts of a smaller size compared to those with less experience.[29] As friable ceramic types, such as Early Saxon handmade wares, are prone to erosion in the plough soil, and as such are more likely to be of a smaller size, variation in the recovery of this material may underestimate the extent of activity in these periods. It is possible that the information about the past recovered by fieldwalking in such cases is distorted through recovery bias, although these issues may be countered by the same worker undertaking the entirety of the survey.

More importantly, the recovery of material when fieldwalking is greatly impacted by the environmental conditions in which the survey is conducted. Sunlight, weather and soil conditions can significantly alter the recovery of artefacts, with strong winds, heavy rain, bright sunlight, and ground cover each negatively impacting the quantity of material recovered.[30] As many of these issues are beyond the control of the fieldworker, it is inevitable that there will be variation in the recovery of artefacts that may serve to exacerbate the extent of activity in some

[29] Foard, 'Recovery of Archaeological Information', 37.
[30] Foard, 'Recovery of Archaeological Information', 37.

areas while understating it in others. In essence, consistency in the results of fieldwalking surveys across large areas of the landscape is difficult to achieve.[31]

The relationship between the sample of material recovered by fieldwalking and the total artefact populations both contained within the plough soil and in the original archaeological deposit is also unclear. It has long been noted that it is not possible to recover all artefacts contained within the plough soil during fieldwalking surveys, with, perhaps, only 2% of all ploughzone material located on the surface where it can be retrieved by fieldwalking,[32] although this has been disputed.[33] While retrieving such a sample should still be representative of all past activity on a site, the varied survival rates of ceramics in the plough soil suggests that this may not always be the case. Such notions suggest that the sample recovered by fieldwalking and the total population of artefacts initially deposited in the plough soil are not one and the same, both in terms of composition and quantity.[34] While valuable, the results of fieldwalking must, on occasion, be treated with caution and may be biased towards those periods in which large quantities of durable ceramics were in use.

The results of fieldwalking are also greatly influenced by the quantities of pottery in circulation in any given period and are regionally varied. Although the archaeological signature of the Roman period is characterised by plentiful, durable pottery, for example, areas of England, such as the West Midlands, were essentially aceramic for much of the post-Roman period.[35] Although occupation in these periods is attested through documentary sources, these societies are archaeologically invisible, at least in terms of pottery assemblages. While fieldwalking has contributed greatly to current understanding of the historic landscape, the efficacy of this technique is largely restricted to only those societies that produced durable ceramic or lithic artefacts; the use of fieldwalking alone to uncover historic settlement patterns can serve to neglect the extent of activity in certain periods.

Fieldwalking surveys are also restricted to areas in which the action of cultivation brings material to the surface; such techniques cannot, therefore, be used on land under permanent pasture,

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[31] Stephen Upex, 'Surface Scatters, Rates of Destruction and Problems of Ploughing and Weathering in Cambridgeshire', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 93 (2004): 164.
[32] David Crowther, 'Old Land Surfaces and Modern Ploughsoil: Implications of Recent Work at Maxey, Cambs', *Scottish Archaeological Review* 2 (1983): 31–44.
[33] Chris Gerrard, for example, has suggested that 9-25% of pottery is located on the field surface. See Christopher Gerrard, 'Misplaced Faith? Medieval Pottery and Fieldwalking', *Medieval Ceramics* 21 (1997): 64.
[34] W. A. Boismier, *Modelling the Effects of Tillage Processes on Artefact Distribution in the Ploughzone: A Simulation Study of Tillage-Induced Pattern Formation* (Archaeopress, 1997).
[35] Christopher Dyer, 'Dispersed Settlements in Medieval England: A Case Study of Pendock, Worcestershire', *Medieval Archaeology* 34 (1990): 104.

woodland and heathland. Such issues have resulted in the majority of fieldwalking surveys being confined to areas of extensive arable cultivation, such as East Anglia.[36] Such issues also exist at a micro level. Even within areas characterised by widespread arable cultivation, modern patterns of land use have resulted in significant areas in which fieldwalking cannot be employed. While Norfolk is marked by extensive arable land, for example, much of Breckland in the southwest of the county is covered by unploughed heath and Forestry Commission plantations; in such circumstances, fieldwalking can only provide an incomplete view of past activity. Currently occupied settlements pose similar issues. It has been argued that the failed settlements that lay beneath the plough soil are atypical, with the surviving settlement pattern more representative of past occupation.[37] That fieldwalking cannot provide information about successful settlement is a clear limitation.

More fundamentally, the association between scatters of material in the plough soil and subsurface archaeology is somewhat unclear; such issues have been subject to little systematic investigation in recent years. Some have suggested that there is a strong link between subsurface archaeology and the results of fieldwalking, as attested by the association between ploughzone pottery and lithic scatters and subsurface features.[38] Others, however, have questioned whether the results of fieldwalking relate to subsurface archaeology in any real way, with Colin Haselgrove suggesting that the cultivation-induced displacement of material may sever the association between ploughzone material and buried deposits.[39] Such debates remain unresolved, although there is general acceptance that scatters of pottery in the plough soil are largely associated with settlements and cemeteries, as well as middens and manuring in the past.

Moreover, the relationship between subsurface archaeology and surface scatters becomes more tenuous for periods in which little pottery was in circulation. Scatters of Early Saxon pottery, for example, are usually spatially limited and characterised by few sherds; in order to compensate for this, it is often suggested that small quantities of pottery recovered from the

[36] Exceptions include the Shapwick Project and Foard's work in Northamptonshire. See Christopher Gerrard, *The Shapwick Project, Somerset: A Rural Landscape Explored* (Routledge, 2007); Foard, 'Systematic Fieldwalking'.
[37] Sonia Hawkes, 'The Early Saxon Period', in *Archaeology of the Oxford Region*, ed. Grace Briggs et al. (Oxford University, 1986). Such notions have, however, been challenged. See Helena Hamerow, 'Settlement Mobility and the "Middle Saxon Shift": Rural Settlements and Settlement Patterns in Anglo-Saxon England', *Anglo-Saxon England* 20 (1991): 17.
[38] Gaffney and Tingle, *Maddle Farm*, 15–27.
[39] Haselgrove, 'Ploughsoil Artefact Samples', 14–20. See also Gerrard, 'Misplaced Faith?', 66.

plough soil can be equated with a settlement site.[40] While it was demonstrated by fieldwork in Witton, Norfolk, that relatively small scatters of Early Saxon pottery were related to subsurface archaeology,[41] this, without excavation, can be difficult to definitively prove, and a diffuse scatter of ceramics may plausibly represent an intensively manured area rather than a site of domestic occupation.

The association between artefacts in the plough soil and historic activity is also mediated by cultivation; this agricultural activity can significantly impact the distribution of material and may, therefore, limit the value of scatters of pottery from the plough zone in understanding the past. Although the relationship between ceramic material and subsurface archaeology has been suggested to be relatively close, repeated cultivation can, on occasion, remove pottery sherds from their original context to a sizeable degree. [42] The impact of such issues on the distribution of ploughzone material has been the subject of much debate.[43] As Albert Ammerman demonstrated, artefacts can be moved by as much as 9m by ploughing over six years, although the average displacement was closer to 2m.[44] Such notions suggest that while cultivation has indeed resulted in the movement of material in the plough soil, the association between pottery and the original location of deposition remains relatively close. Hayfield has similarly argued that frequent cultivation produces little lateral dispersal of ploughzone material, arguing instead that ploughing causes artefact 'oscillation' that results in little net displacement.[45] In such cases, pottery, while moved vertically through the plough soil, remains spatially associated with the place of deposition.

Yet, much greater cultivation-induced distribution has also been posited. Adam Daubney, for example, has suggested that ploughzone material can shift by as much as 10m per ploughing episode; within a decade, an object can be entirely divorced from its original context.[46] Indeed,

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[40] Fleming, for example, argues that two sherds of pottery can be equated with a settlement in Fiona Fleming, *A Persistence of Place: A Study of Continuity and Regionality in the Roman and Early Medieval Rural Settlement Patterns of Norfolk, Kent and Somerset* (Tempus Reparatum, 2016), 21–23.

[41] Andrew Lawson, *The Archaeology of Witton, near North Walsham* (East Anglian Archaeology, 1983), 50.

[42] Gaffney and Tingle, *Maddle Farm*, 23–28.

[43] Boismier, *Tillage Processes*; Fernando Diez-Martín, 'Evaluating the Effect of Plowing on the Archaeological Record: The Early Middle Palaeolithic in the River Duero Basin Plateaus (North-Central Spain)', *Quaternary International* 214 (2010): 30–43.

[44] Albert J. Ammerman, 'Plow-Zone Experiments in Calabria, Italy', *Journal of Field Archaeology* 12 (1985): 33–40.

[45] Colin Hayfield, *An Archaeological Survey of the Parish of Wharram Percy, East Yorkshire* (British Archaeological Reports, 1987), 11.

[46] Adam Daubney, *Portable Antiquities, Palimpsests, & Persistent Places: A Multi-Period Approach to Portable Antiquities Scheme Data in Lincolnshire* (Sidestone Press, 2016), 85.

it was suggested from the results of investigation at Damerham, Hampshire that 'surface collection offered a poor indication of the location and character' of subsurface archaeology located through other methods of archaeological study.[47] Although much work has been undertaken to understand the impact of ploughing on the distribution of artefacts,[48] interrogating the past through information that has, by its very nature, been removed from its original context is problematic, although it appears that there is an association between ploughzone scatters of pottery and past activity. Although once much discussed, this debate has never been reconciled; the relationship between scatters of pottery in the plough soil and subsurface archaeology is inherently variable, and few general assumptions can be made regarding the relationship between pottery scatters and subsurface archaeology at a local level.

Despite these issues, it is evident that fieldwalking remains an important method of archaeological survey. Fieldwalking surveys often recover large quantities of material related to past activities that are difficult to identify through other archaeological survey techniques. There are, however, fundamental problems in interpreting the past through scatters of pottery, not least the relatively limited suite of activities represented in fieldwalking datasets. As will be suggested below, the incorporation of metal detecting data into studies of the past can, in many ways, mitigate these limitations.

Metal Detecting, the Portable Antiquities Scheme and Archaeological Research

Much like fieldwalking, there is great variation in metal detecting methodologies, ranging from unstructured amateur detecting, such as the data recorded with the PAS, to systematic metal detecting undertaken as part of archaeological research. While many have focussed on the strengths and biases inherent in data retrieved from the PAS,[49] there is a comparative paucity of data derived from systematic metal detecting and, as such, little has been written about the benefits and drawbacks of such survey techniques.[50]

[47] Olaf Bayer et al., 'Damerham Archaeology Project: Interim Report on Ploughzone Investigation in August 2013', *Historic England Report* 119 (2015): 5.
[48] Upex, 'Surface Scatters'; Ammerman, 'Plow-Zone Experiments'.
[49] Robbins, 'Past to Present'; Tom Brindle, *The Portable Antiquities Scheme and Roman Britain* (British Museum, 2014), 1–9; Daubney, *Palimpsests*, 53–55.
[50] An exception to this is the work at Rendlesham which has generated much work exploring the use of systematic metal detecting in archaeological surveys. See, for example, Faye Minter et al., *Rendlesham Survey 2008-2014: Methodological Review*, Unpublished Report no. 6471 (Historic England, 2016), 1–25.

Systematic metal detecting surveys involve the use of metal detectors to search specific areas in order to recover metalwork, the location of which is often recorded using a handheld GPS.[51] The entirety of the area studied is systematically metal detected, retrieving, in theory at least, a complete and uniform sample of all metalwork in the plough soil, although this is not always the case.[52] Systematic metal detecting was first employed in the 1980s at Maxey, Cambridgeshire and Thetford, Norfolk,[53] and has since been used to explore settlement and other past activity from the Late Iron Age to the post-medieval period.[54] The data produced by systematic metal detecting is inherently valuable. This methodology often recovers large quantities of closely dated and accurately located finds. Information not usually noted by amateur metal detectorists, such as the time spent searching each field, is often recorded during systematic metal detecting surveys, allowing the data to be normalised to mitigate against biases caused by the repeated searching of productive areas; the patterns displayed in the data provided by systematic metal detecting are, therefore, real, rather than the result of recovery bias.

Although such data is evidently preferrable, most of the metal detecting datasets available to archaeologists and historians derives from the unsystematic searching of the landscape by amateur metal detectorists, the results of which are recorded with the PAS. Once artefacts are recovered, responsible detectorists record these with the local FLO, with the information about the find submitted to the central PAS database, although estimates vary regarding the number of detectorists who do not record their finds.[55] While the biases inherent in this data are widely acknowledged,[56] there is increasing acceptance that the PAS, as well as metal detecting in general, offers a valuable window into historic activity. Although the number of projects making use of PAS data is growing,[57] the material recorded via the PAS remains underexploited in studies of the past. Tim Pestell and Katharina Ulmschneider, writing in 2004, lamented that the

[51] Such a methodology was used in Rendlesham Revealed project, see Minter et al., *Rendlesham Methodological Review*, 10.
[52] Other methodologies have been employed, however, such as the use of transects akin to fieldwalking surveys. See Glenn Foard and Anne Curry, *Bosworth 1485: A Battlefield Rediscovered* (Oxbow Books, 2013), 99–118.
[53] David Crowther, 'Metal Detectors at Maxey', *Current Archaeology* 7 (1981): 172–76; T. Gregory and A. J. G. Rogerson, 'Metal-Detecting in Archaeological Excavation', *Antiquity* 58 (1984): 179–84.
[54] Glenn Foard, *Battlefield Archaeology of the English Civil War* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2012); Tim Pestell, 'Using Material Culture to Define Holy Space: The Bromholm Project', in *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Sarah Hamilton and Andrew Spicer (Aldershot: Ashgate Pub, 2005), 161–86.
[55] Bland, for example, estimates that over half of detectorists record their finds with the PAS, while Barford suggests that only 12.5% of detectorists have recorded a find with the PAS. See Bland, 'Development and Future', 71; Barford, 'Artefact Collecting', 44–45.
[56] Such biases have been explored in depth by Robbins. See Robbins, 'Past to Present'.
[57] Brindle, *Roman Britain*, 1.

'enormous potential' of metal detecting datasets for understanding the historic landscape had 'yet to be fully realised';[58] such notions remain true today.

Metal Detecting: Problems and Possibilities

Systematic metal detecting, as well as data derived from the PAS, has much to contribute to understanding the past. Unlike much of the pottery recovered by fieldwalking, many metal artefacts, particularly coinage, can be relatively closely dated, enabling more accurate site chronologies to be developed than fieldwalking alone. While, for example, Ipswich ware is often employed as evidence of Middle Saxon occupation, the use of this ceramic type spans at least 130 years;[59] while enabling preliminary interpretation of patterns of landscape change, these ceramic scatters offer little insight into fine-grained patterns of activity in the countryside. Contemporary metalwork, such as coinage, can, however, be dated to within 15 years of minting. While the lack of archaeological contexts and, therefore, limited confidence in the date of deposition, can inhibit the close interpretation of landscape change using these datasets, scatters of metalwork in the plough soil offer the opportunity to refine the chronologies of activity in the landscape.

Metal detecting, and the scatters of material it recovers, may also enable more accurate interpretation of patterns of wealth and status in the past than fieldwalking. As previously highlighted, many periods are characterised by pottery types that were relatively ubiquitous throughout society. Patterns of metalwork presence and absence, as well as the composition of assemblages, offer, however, the opportunity to closely interrogate the relative status of past activity. The association between wealth, status and ploughzone scatters will be interrogated in Chapter Two.

More fundamentally, metal detecting can reveal a wide range of activities that fieldwalking may not. It has been noted above that pottery was largely confined to the domestic sphere and fieldwalking, therefore, may only identify a limited suite of activities associated with the dwelling or the waste that settlements produced.[60] Scatters of metalwork are apparently associated with a much wider suite of activities, such as hunting, warfare and livestock management. The signatures of commercial activity such as fairs and markets may also be recovered by metal

[58] Katharina Ulmschneider and Tim Pestell, 'Introduction: Early Medieval Markets and "Productive" Sites', in *Markets in Early Medieval Europe: Trading and 'Productive' Sites, 650-850*, ed. Tim Pestell and Katharina Ulmschneider (Oxbow Books, 2003), 3.
[59] Paul Blinkhorn, *The Ipswich Ware Project: Ceramics, Trade and Society in Middle Saxon England* (Medieval Pottery Research Group, 2012).
[60] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 72–73.

detecting.[61] As such activity is unlikely to produce pottery scatters or subsurface features, the traces of these activities may not be identified by other archaeological survey techniques. Such examples stand for a wider pattern; metalwork artefacts entered the plough soil through a wider range of taphonomic processes than pottery and, therefore, represent a greater number of historic activities, although, as will later be discussed in Chapter Two, differentiating between these activities can prove problematic.[62]

Metal detecting may also be employed in a wider range of contexts than fieldwalking. The recovery of artefacts using metal detectors, unlike fieldwalking, does not rely on a cultivated and weathered ground surface, enabling the employment of this technique in a wider suite of landscape and environmental contexts.

There are, however, biases inherent in metal detecting methodologies. Although less subject to problems of object visibility than fieldwalking, metal detecting is also impacted by issues beyond the control of the researcher. In order to uncover artefacts, metal detectors send an electromagnetic pulse through the soil. The strength of this pulse, as well as the response given by artefacts, is impacted by the soil conditions in which the detecting is taking place; heavy, waterlogged soils transmit these pulses better than loose, dry ones, for example; such issues can be exacerbated by weather conditions such as periods of heavy rain. This varying effectiveness of metal detecting technology can translate into differing artefact recovery rates.[63] In short, much like fieldwalking, consistency in the results of metal detecting can be difficult to achieve over large areas of the countryside.

The results of metal detecting are further influenced by the experience of the detectorist as well as the equipment used, with experienced detectorists and higher quality equipment more likely to recover a larger number of artefacts, particularly those of a smaller size.[64] Such issues can, however, be mitigated against during structured detecting by the same detectorist carrying out the entirety of the survey, although these limitations cannot be countered in PAS data.

Much like fieldwalking datasets, the association between ploughzone metalwork scatters and historic activity is also relatively uncertain. While such issues have been extensively explored in the context of pottery scatters, the relationship between metalwork and subsurface archaeology has been subject to little interrogation. It appears, however, reasonable to

[61] Eljas Oksanen and Michael Lewis, 'Medieval Commercial Sites: As Seen Through Portable Antiquities Scheme Data', *The Antiquaries Journal* 100 (2020): 109–40.
[62] Pestell, 'Bromholm', 171.
[63] Brindle, *Roman Britain*, 18.
[64] Robbins, 'Past to Present', 105.

postulate that, like pottery, the link between artefacts recovered by metal detectorists and historic activity may similarly not always be straightforward. While some have argued that metal detecting finds often relate to settlement or activities that took place in the vicinity of settlement sites,[65] the extent to which this is true is unclear. It is undeniable that, with frequent land use, the chance of metalwork being lost increases, yet, many factors, such as hoarding and ritual deposition, may influence the quantity of metalwork available to be recovered by metal detectorists.[66] As such, assuming a linear relationship between concentrations of metalwork and settlement is problematic. Such issues will be explored in more detail in Chapter Two.

The relationship between metalwork and 'off-site' activity is also poorly understood. While it is near-universally accepted that low-density scatters of pottery result from historic manuring,[67] it is less clear whether the same can be said of metalwork. Indeed, owing to the tendency of metal detectorists to focus on productive areas rather than uniformly searching the landscape, the thin scatters of metalwork that represent such activity may not be recovered at all. Some have suggested that diffuse scatters of metalwork may be the result of manuring.[68] Yet, it appears unlikely that metalwork was routinely discarded with domestic waste, owing to its recyclable nature; due to this, the extent to which thin spreads of metalwork can be interpreted as the result of manuring remains unclear, limiting the value of metal detecting datasets for interpreting patterns of historic agriculture. Understanding this relationship is a key aim of this present study.

The impact of cultivation upon the distribution of metalwork is also uncertain. Although such issues have been much explored in the context of fieldwalking datasets,[69] little work has been undertaken to examine the impact of cultivation upon the distribution of metalwork.[70] It has been suggested that the movement of metalwork in plough soil is similar to that proposed for pottery;[71] such notions have, however, been subject to little direct study and the extent to which the varying size and shape of metal artefacts influences their distribution remains uncertain. It is, however, apparent that, much like pottery recovered from the plough soil, frequent

[65] Rogerson, *Fransham*, 11.
[66] Brindle, *Roman Britain*, 15–18.
[67] Richard Jones, 'Signatures in the Soil: The Use of Pottery in Manure Scatters in the Identification of Medieval Arable Farming Regimes', *Archaeological Journal* 161 (2004): 159–88.
[68] Daubney, *Palimpsests*, 78–79; David Hinton, 'Deserted Medieval Villages and the Objects from Them', in *Deserted Villages Revisited*, ed. Christopher Dyer and Richard Jones (University of Hertfordshire Press, 2010), 88–91.
[69] Ammerman, 'Plow-Zone Experiments'; Boismier, *Tillage Processes*.
[70] An exception is Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 59–65.
[71] Daubney, *Palimpsests*, 84–88; Mary Chester-Kadwell, *Early Anglo-Saxon Communities in the Landscape of Norfolk* (Archaeopress, 2009), 66–67.

cultivation causes the displacement of ploughzone metalwork, often on a considerable scale. A hoard of Roman coins, for example, was scattered by as much as 90m from the original site of deposition,[72] while artefacts recovered during recent research at Rendlesham were separated by some 261m due to cultivation.[73] Such evidence suggests that, at a granular level, cultivation can significantly alter the distribution of metalwork, although such cases are likely atypical. Importantly, as with pottery scatters, the displacement of this metalwork is bounded by the confines of the modern field pattern (see Chapter Three).

The extent to which the sample of metalwork recovered from the plough soil is representative of the original artefact population is also unclear. Much like fieldwalking, metal detecting is more likely to retrieve larger objects, with the greater size of such material producing a stronger signal to be interpreted by the metal detectorist. Indeed, it has been observed that the orientation of objects within the plough soil, as well as the shape and composition of the artefact, can influence the response given by metal detectors and may, therefore, impact the likelihood of recovery.[74] While metal detecting should, in theory, retrieve a representative sample, variations in artefact size, as well as differences in the rate in which metalwork is brought to the surface by cultivation, suggest that this may not be true. A greater number of historic activities are likely represented in the total metalwork assemblages contained within the plough soil, but it remains unclear whether the sample retrieved by metal detectorists is representative of all historic material contained within buried deposits.

There are evidently issues inherent in using metal detecting surveys to understand the historic landscape. These are, however, not insurmountable, and controlled metal detecting methodologies continue to grow in importance. Despite this value, metalwork recovered as part of systematic surveys is in the minority; most metal detecting data available to archaeologists results from unsystematic amateur detecting recorded with the PAS. Such data is impacted by further issues. Katherine Robbins, in her seminal work on the biases inherent in PAS data, identified seven key areas of bias that impact the use of metalwork from the PAS in studies of the past. While some of these apply to all metal detecting data and have been explored above, Robbins identifies issues of recovery and reporting as specifically impacting data from the PAS.[75]

[72] Daubney, *Palimpsests*, 86–87.
[73] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 60. For further analysis of the Rendlesham dataset, see Chapter Two.
[74] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 57–59.
[75] Robbins also identifies recording issues as impacting PAS data, but these have little impact on the present study. See Robbins, 'Past to Present', 47–49.

Data from the PAS is chronologically and geographically broad, with material dating from the Mesolithic to modern day recorded across England and Wales, offering immediate access to a spatially and chronologically diverse dataset. While PAS data is widely distributed, it has been identified that there are biases in the areas searched by detectorists that may serve to exacerbate the extent of activity. As Robbins has suggested, metal detectorists are attracted to areas of arable cultivation, with PAS data concentrated in arable areas such as East Anglia. Although it has been demonstrated that East Anglia was densely populated in the past,[76] the number of artefacts recorded via the PAS in counties such as Norfolk, while perhaps reflective of this pattern, may also be the result of increased searching in these areas.

These issues are exacerbated by the repeated searching of 'hotspots'. While it is undeniable that some metal detectorists search the landscape to uncover archaeological information, the vast majority of detectorists take an object-centred approach, looking for the valuable objects themselves rather than the information that they can provide about the past. The motivations underpinning the activities of fieldwalkers, owing to the low chances of recovering valuable artefacts, are often more aligned with those of archaeologists and, as such, fieldwalkers often take a more standardised approach, focussed upon retrieving data that can be used to explore historic activity. Metal detectorists often focus, however, on recovering large numbers of artefacts and, therefore, repeatedly search productive areas rather than uniformly exploring the landscape to retrieve a representative sample of metalwork. Such issues can clearly exacerbate the quantity of material found in some areas while understating it in others. These biases exist at varying levels. Metal detectorists may choose to ignore apparently unproductive fields. Indeed, many detectorists, after searching a field once, move to another field if they have made only 'one-off finds'.[77] While such areas appear in PAS data as devoid of activity in the past, this is the result of a lack of searching as opposed historic patterns. Such issues are also present at a more granular level. Detectorists will focus their efforts within particular areas of individual fields; such patterns of searching, once again, serve to exacerbate the extent of activity in discrete zones that have previously proved productive while neglecting activities that may be represented by less dense scatters of material. Such issues can, on occasion, substantially influence the spatial patterning displayed in the data. As the PAS does not record data regarding

[76] David Dymond and Hilary Todd, 'Population Densities, 1327 & 1524', in *An Historical Atlas of Suffolk*, ed. David Dymond and Edward Martin (Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service, 1988), 80.
[77] Brindle, *Roman Britain*, 19.

the frequency of searching, the dataset cannot be normalised and, therefore, these issues cannot be countered.

These patterns are further muddied by 'spatial constraints' that 'powerfully influence the recovery' of metalwork by metal detectorists,[78] with, for example National Trust land, urban areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments all 'off-limits'.[79] While mapping such constraints allows the impact of these obvious features to be mitigated, access issues caused by, for example, landowners withholding permission, are more difficult to counter.

Data from the PAS is also subject to issues of reporting; some detectorists deem particular items to be 'important' enough to record while others do not. When studying individual sites, such issues are likely to be insignificant, especially when the data employed is derived from a single detectorist. On a wider scale, however, such issues may have sizeable impacts. As some detectorists record all finds, while others report only a sample of 'significant' artefacts, there is the potential for discrepancies between the quantity of finds recorded in some areas compared to others; these issues may serve to exacerbate the extent of settlement and activity in particular areas while understating it elsewhere. Indeed, some detectorists choose not to report their finds at all, causing clear issues when attempting to analyse gaps in the spatial distribution of activity.[80] With some areas subject to investigation, the results of which remain unrecorded, asserting that areas of absence in PAS data derive from genuine historic patterns rather than issues of recording is problematic.

Further to this, no information is recorded by the PAS regarding areas searched where no material has been recovered. As this 'negative evidence' is not recorded,[81] it is problematic to assert that areas in which no artefacts have been recovered are the result of historical trends as opposed to modern recovery issues. Although John Blair suggests the patterns of absence implied by PAS data are real,[82] this cannot, without further investigation, be definitively proven. While, once again, at a national scale, the impact of such issues is limited, when attempting to investigate past activity on a local level, the lack of recording of unproductive areas of the landscape that have been subject to investigation can cause difficulty when exploring patterns of occupation and absence in the past.[83]

[78] Oksanen and Lewis, 'Medieval Commercial Sites', 113.
[79] Robbins, 'Past to Present', 61.
[80] Chester-Kadwell, *Early Anglo-Saxon Communities*, 64.
[81] Brindle, *Roman Britain*, 19.
[82] John Blair, *Building Anglo-Saxon England* (Princeton University Press, 2018), 14.
[83] Brindle, *Roman Britain*, 19.

Metal detecting datasets are of immense value in the study of the past. While systematic metal detecting data is preferrable, data from the PAS, although not without issue, is key to understanding the historic landscape. Metal detecting produces closely datable and, when undertaken systematically, accurately located artefacts that can be used to understand landscape change. Indeed, systematic metal detecting datasets are often more accurately located than many pottery scatters recovered by fieldwalking.[84] Although metal detecting, by its very nature, relies on past societies using metallic objects and, as such, is of little use in understanding societies before the Bronze Age, metal detecting can be employed in a range of contexts to explore past landscapes.

Although valuable, there are issues in employing metal detecting data. While the interpretation of fieldwalking data has been the subject of much investigation, the relationship between metalwork and various historic activities has not been sufficiently interrogated. Scatters of metalwork are apparently associated with a wider range of activities than spreads of pottery, yet the relationship between metalwork and historic agriculture, in particular, is unclear. There are additional issues in employing PAS data; the data recorded with the PAS is subject to numerous biases, leaving a dataset that may be incomplete and unrepresentative of past activity. Such issues are not insurmountable, however, and once overtly faced, the PAS proves a valuable resource.

Ploughzone Archaeology: Problems and Possibilities

The preceding paragraphs have laid out the various problems and possibilities of ploughzone archaeology. Fieldwalking is an inherently valuable technique, offering insight into patterns of settlement and cultivation in the past. Indeed, such is the significance of this survey method that much of current understanding of the historic settlement and arable agriculture at a landscape scale is based upon ploughzone pottery scatters. There are, however, issues in the use of fieldwalking to understand the past, not least the limited range of activities represented in ceramic assemblages. Metalwork assemblages, in contrast, derive from a much wider suite of past processes. This range of activities, and the taphonomic processes that result in the formation of ploughzone metalwork scatters are, however, poorly understood.

[84] Julian D. Richards and John Naylor, 'The Real Value of Buried Treasure. VASLE: The Viking and Anglo-Saxon Landscape and Economy Project', in *Metal Detecting and Archaeology*, ed. Suzie Thomas and Peter Stone (Boydell Press, 2009), 170.

As highlighted throughout, both fieldwalking and metal detecting offer complementary insights into the historic landscape.[85] Yet, despite this, the results of these survey techniques have not been systematically incorporated into a single study. Andrew Rogerson and Alan Davison, for example, employed ceramic data to understand the development of settlement in the landscape of Norfolk,[86] while Tom Brindle solely used metalwork to explore the Roman countryside.[87] In short, despite pottery and metalwork offering valuable insight into the historic landscape when woven together, little attempt has been made to combine these datasets into a single study. Through a previously unpublished case study, the differences in each of these datasets will be explored, and a novel methodology incorporating both pottery and metalwork scatters into a single study will be developed in the following chapter.

[85] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 72–73.
[86] Rogerson, *Fransham*; Davison, *South-East Norfolk*.
[87] Brindle, *Roman Britain*.

Chapter Two: Pottery, Metalwork and Ploughzone Methodologies: A Case Study of Rendlesham, *c.* AD 250-1350.

The Problem of Periodisation

Before the case study is explored, the chronological framework used throughout the present study must be set out. The traditional tripartite periodisation of the 'Anglo-Saxon period', largely based on ceramic sequences, has proved pervasive.[88] This has, however, recently been challenged, both in the context of the ethnic connotations such terms carry, as well as the implication that such schemes of periodisation present the fifth to eleventh centuries in terms of periods of stasis punctuated by times of rapid change.[89] Indeed, although based upon patterns of pottery use, this periodisation is no longer compatible with current understanding of early medieval ceramic sequences. While the use of Ipswich ware has long been associated with the Middle Saxon period, for example, the adoption of this ceramic type has recently been revised, suggesting that production may have begun as late as the eighth century, with the widespread use of the pottery perhaps even later.[90] As such, an altered scheme of periodisation will be used here, based on patterns of ceramic use in East Suffolk, as opposed to arbitrary political dates. The study period is here divided into five individual periods: *c*. AD 250-410, *c*. 410-700, *c*. 700-850, *c*. 850-1100 and *c*. 1100-1350.[91]

The period *c.* AD 250-410 is here termed the later Roman period. The ploughzone signature of contemporary activity is characterised by abundant pottery, particularly locally produced greywares, as well as large quantities of coinage associated with both urban and rural sites.[92] The end of this period is, however, somewhat problematic. It is often argued that the end of

[88] See, for example, Chester-Kadwell's focus on 'Early Saxon' Norfolk in Chester-Kadwell, *Early Anglo-Saxon Communities*.
[89] Christopher Scull, 'Periodisation and the Language of Transition: Barriers to Characterising and Understanding Change Across the 4th to 7th Centuries in Southern Britain', in *Transitions and Relationships Over Land and Sea in the Early Middle Ages of Northern Europe*, ed. Andrew Richardson et al. (Isle Heritage, 2023).
[90] Ipswich ware was traditionally dated to AD 650-850, while Blinkhorn suggested production began as late as AD 720, continuing in use until 850. Recent radiocarbon dating of an Ipswich ware kiln at Stoke Quay, Ipswich, which implies that the production of the ceramic type may have commenced at the beginning of the eighth century, however. See Blinkhorn, *Ipswich Ware*; Richard Brown et al., *Excavations at Stoke Quay, Ipswich* (East Anglian Archaeology, 2020), 139–40.
[91] Where metalwork spans these chronological divisions, artefacts have been placed into the period in which there is the greatest overlap. Those poorly dated objects that span major chronological periods have been discounted from the following discussion.
[92] Richard Reece, 'Site-Finds in Roman Britain', *Britannia* 26 (1995): 179.

Roman Britain was marked by much continuity, particularly in the rural landscape;[93] to simply suggest that the Romano-British landscape and society was abandoned in the first decades of the fifth century is to neglect the complex patterns of continuity and change apparent in the countryside. Such issues must be considered throughout the following analysis.

The initial post-Roman period is here suggested to range from *c.* 410-700. The term 'Early Saxon' is used throughout the following discussion, although it is used to describe the entire population living within the landscape of East Suffolk between the early fifth and late seventh centuries, with no ethnic connotations implied. Fieldwalking assemblages of this period are distinguished by small spreads of relatively ubiquitous handmade pottery, a ceramic type suggested to have fallen out of use at the end of the seventh century.[94] Fifth-to-eighth-century metalwork assemblages are characterised by 'Germanic' cultural material, much of which may have been contained within funerary deposits. The end of this period is marked by the adoption of Ipswich ware and the decline of furnished burial.[95]

The period *c.* 700-850 is distinguished by the widespread use of Ipswich ware pottery, although the dating of the adoption of this pottery remains uncertain, perhaps best placed in the latter seventh or early eighth century. This period is referred to as 'Middle Saxon' throughout the following analysis, although no comment on the ethnicity of those living within East Suffolk is implied by the use of this term. The metalwork signature of this period is largely marked by coinage, hooked tags and pins, although these are rare compared to earlier centuries, partly owing to the decline of furnished burials. The end of this period is marked, in East Anglia at least, by the abandonment of Ipswich ware.

The period *c.* 850-1100 is characterised by the use of Thetford ware, although other ceramic types, such as St Neots ware, are occasionally recovered from East Anglian settlement sites. While many studies employing the traditional tripartite division of the Anglo-Saxon period end with the coming of the Normans, the periodisation here employed extends beyond this. Although the Norman conquest was a political watershed, the second half of the eleventh century did not witness similarly seismic transformations in the rural landscape, excepting

[93] Stephen Rippon et al., *The Fields of Britannia: Continuity and Change in the Late Roman and Early Medieval Landscape* (Oxford University Press, 2015).
[94] Blinkhorn, *Ipswich Ware*.
[95] Recent work has suggested that the decline of furnished burial occurred in *c.* AD 680. See Alexandra Bayliss et al., eds, *Anglo-Saxon Graves and Grave Goods of the 6th and 7th Centuries AD: A Chronological Framework* (Society for Medieval Archaeology, 2013).

changes in land ownership.[96] Thetford also ware continued in use at least until *c*. 1100, suggesting that any discussion of the last centuries of the Anglo-Saxon period based on ploughzone evidence must continue until the end of the eleventh century. The metalwork signature of this period is somewhat slight, with rural sites marked by small numbers of artefacts such as hooked tags, brooches and coinage.

The High Middle Ages is here defined as the period *c.* 1100-1350. This period witnessed a diversification of ceramic types in use both regionally and nationally. The majority of the High Medieval pottery assemblage in the following analysis is comprised of locally produced coarseware sherds akin to those from kilns at nearby Melton and Hollesley, the production of which began in the twelfth century.[97] Although the precise date at which pottery of this type went out of use is unclear, it was apparently replaced by Late Medieval wares in the mid-fourteenth century.[98] The metalwork signature of many sites in this period, particularly those wealthier settlements, is comprised of large quantities of artefacts, including coinage. The end of this period is marked both by the replacement of coarsewares with their Late Medieval counterparts, as well as the Black Death.

There are clear issues with such periodisation, not least the apparent continuity between the Late Roman and post-Roman periods; such issues must be considered throughout the following analysis. Yet, the periodisation set out in the foregoing pages offers a valid lens through which initial analysis of both ploughzone assemblages, as well as the landscape more widely, can take place.

Rendlesham – History and Topography

The modern parish of Rendlesham lies in East Suffolk, some 5km distant from the Early and Middle Saxon cemetery at Sutton Hoo (Figure 2.1). The case study area lies in the west of the parish, covering 12 fields extending across the parish boundary into adjacent Eyke.[99] The study area encompasses a coherent swathe of the landscape overlooking the marshes and floodplain of the river Deben.

[96] Stephen Mileson and Stuart Brookes, *Peasant Perceptions of Landscape: Ewelme Hundred, South Oxfordshire, 500-1650* (Oxford University Press, 2021), 149.
[97] Sue Anderson and John Newman, 'An Early Medieval Pottery Production Site at Bury Hill, Melton, Suffolk', *Medieval Ceramics* 22–23 (1998): 148–52.
[98] A similar chronology is followed in Paul Spoerry, *The Production and Distribution of Medieval Pottery in Cambridgeshire*, no. 159 (East Anglian Archaeology, 2016).
[99] The *Lordship and Landscape* project study area was somewhat larger, covering *c*. 170 hectares. See Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 28.

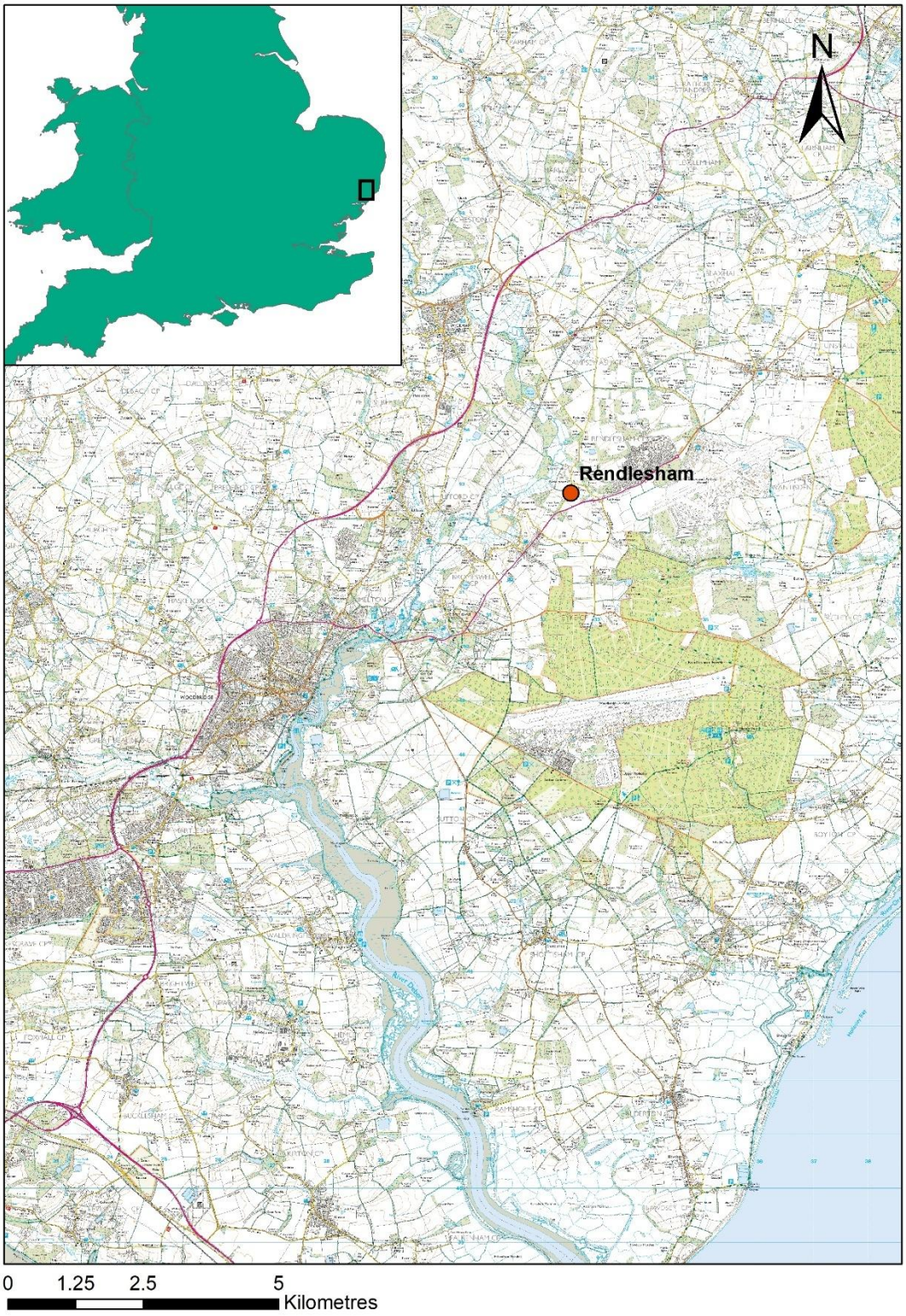

Figure 2.1: the locations of the Rendlesham case study site. All maps throughout created using Ordnance Survey data from Edina Digimap, produced under © Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey (100025252).

Rendlesham lies at the western edge of the 'Suffolk Sandlings', an area of light, acidic sands running in a narrow band along the Suffolk Coast. The study area itself comprises a complex mix of soils, with the valley floor marked by peaty and alluvial soils, while the valley slopes are characterised by light, relatively fertile soils of the Newport 2 Association. Areas of higher ground in the parish are largely characterised by clays of the Burlingham Association; such soils, particularly when covering areas of level ground, are prone to waterlogging (Figure 2.2). The modern landscape of the study area is largely arable, although areas of grassland and non-arable land use persist in the area surrounding the church of St Gregory the Great and Naunton Hall.[100]

The presence of significant Anglo-Saxon activity in Rendlesham has long been known, with Bede describing a '*vicus regius'* in the parish, interest in which increased following the discovery of the royal burials at Sutton Hoo.[101] Targeted fieldwalking in the area around St Gregory's church in the 1980s revealed a scatter of Roman, Anglo-Saxon and High Medieval pottery but no direct evidence of the high status settlement was identified. Following repeated illegal metal detecting on the site, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS) implemented a systematic metal detecting survey in 2008-2009 which was subsequently expanded and continued until 2017, while other survey techniques were also employed, such as geophysics and targeted excavation, as part of the *Lordship and Landscape in East Anglia* and *Rendlesham Revealed* projects in the period 2013-2014 and 2021-2023.[102] The metal detecting survey and subsequent excavation uncovered a vast assemblage of finds and archaeological features, ranging from prehistoric ditches to a Second World War searchlight battery.

The main focus of the Rendlesham surveys was the high status Early and Middle Saxon site identified by Bede (Figure 2.3). In the later Roman period, it has been suggested that the site was marked by an official or military presence, attested by military belt fittings and a hoard of Theodosian coinage.[103] In the fifth century, a settlement, including *grubenhauser* attested by excavation, was established in the centre of the study area, lying adjacent to a small stream, the occupation of which continued, perhaps, into the eighth century. This settlement was apparently of somewhat moderate status, although some degree of social differentiation is attested by precious metal weapon fittings. A number of cemetery sites, covering some 2ha,

[100] For further information on the landscape of the study area, see Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 28–37.
[101] Bertram Colgrave and Roger Mynors, eds, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Clarendon Press, 1969), 285.
[102] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 44–56; Christopher Scull et al., 'Excavations at Rendlesham, Suffolk, 2021–2023: Investigating an Early-Medieval Royal Settlement', *Medieval Archaeology* 68 (2024): 203–28. The full publication of this excavation is anticipated.
[103] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 145–50.

were also established, with the material culture and excavated evidence suggesting the presence of a mixed inhumation and cremation cemetery. In the later sixth century, a great hall complex was constructed on the promontory to the south, a number of halls associated with which have been attested via excavation, surrounded by a sizeable ditch and palisade. The site was marked by a large scatter of metalwork, including 'elite indicators', as well as evidence of metalworking in gold and silver, while excavated faunal assemblages attest periodic feasting, suggesting the presence of a social elite. Activity declined at both settlements in the second quarter of the eighth century, with the elite complex and the area of occupation to the north both largely abandoned. Settlement retrenched toward the rural norm, marked by a small concentration of farms around Rendlesham Green, while manorial sites were established associated with Naunton Hall, High House and St Gregory's Church and rectory in the Late Saxon and High Medieval periods.[104] The material associated with these later phases of activity has not, until now, been systematically interrogated.

The Case Study Dataset

The dataset upon which the following discussion is based derives from a number of sources. The fieldwalking data partly results from fieldwork undertaken over three seasons from 2021 to 2023 as part of the *Rendlesham Revealed* project, managed by SCCAS. Four fields – Sandwalk, Hut Field, Park Field and Kitchen Piece – were fieldwalked as part of the project. The fieldwalking on Sandwalk was undertaken and managed by a team of archaeologists, while the Hut Field, Park Field and Kitchen Piece fieldwork was undertaken and supervised by the present author. The fieldwork employed the grid method, with all surveys employing a 20m grid, excepting Hut Field, where a 30m grid was employed. Although it is preferable that a single worker undertakes the survey to limit the number of biases in the data, this was not possible in the case of Rendlesham. A number of volunteers and participants from the project were involved in the fieldwalking, including archaeology students and local archaeological societies. Each of the sites were also surveyed in a variety of soil and weather conditions, again presenting opportunity for recovery biases to influence the dataset. A further three fields (Dog Kennel Field, Collets and Foxburgh South) were surveyed by the present author in 2024 as part of a private agreement with the landowner (Figure 2.5). This fieldwalking data has not previously been mapped or analysed.

[104] For further analysis of the settlement morphology of Rendlesham, see Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 145–75.

The Rendlesham metal detecting data derives from the systematic survey carried out as part of the *Lordship and Landscape Project*, analysis of the fourth to eighth century component of which has recently been published.[105] As part of this survey, a team of four experienced detectorists uniformly and systematically searched each field at least twice, while productive areas were subject to more intensive but less structured investigation, the impact of which is considered in Appendix One. It is important to note, however, that the area metal detected was not coterminous with that fieldwalked, with a greater area of the landscape subject to intensive metal detecting. The finds recovered during the metal detecting survey were assigned a 10-figure grid reference using a handheld GPS. The fieldwork archive from the project is held by SCCAS. The dataset has been normalised to assess and mitigate against the varied patterns of searching within study area (see Appendix One).

The fieldwalking assemblage from the case study area is comprised of a total of 13,747 artefacts, of which 2,309 are pottery sherds dating from the period c. AD 250-1350.[106] The metalwork dataset is composed of 2,221 metal artefacts dating from *c.* AD 250-1350.[107] While the fifth-to-eighth-century component of this metalwork data has previously been analysed, much of the earlier and later material awaits analysis, and the methodological implications of this dataset have not fully been considered. It is this that forms the focus of the below discussion.

Period	**Number of Sherds**
Later Roman	1,318
Early Saxon	114
Middle Saxon	61
Late Saxon	50
High Medieval	766

Table 2.1: The quantities of pottery sherds recovered from the Rendlesham case study area per period. Source: 'Rendlesham Revealed' Fieldwork Archive.

[105] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*.
[106] The remainder was comprised of lithics, post-medieval pottery, ceramic building material and animal bone.
[107] Much of this material is held by SCCAS and can be consulted upon request.

Period	Number of Artefacts
Later Roman	653
Early Saxon	801
Middle Saxon	175
Late Saxon	60
High Medieval	522

Table 2.2: the quantity of metal artefacts recovered from the Rendlesham case study area per period. Source: Lordship and Landscape in East Anglia Archive.

Pottery, Metalwork and Later Roman Settlement in Rendlesham *c*. AD 250-410

A near-continuous later Roman pottery scatter, largely comprised of greyware sherds, has been identified in the Rendlesham study area, three of which represent substantial concentrations of material (Figure 2.7). One such concentration is located in the northwestern corner of Hut Field, while another spans the southeast corner of Park Field and the eastern side of Kitchen Piece, the central focus of which may lay beneath the church or rectory. A dense scatter of pottery, including a number of Horningsea ware storage jar sherds, as well as single sherd of Samian ware, can be found in the north of Park Field, the density of which increases towards the margin of the field, suggesting that the focus of the scatter may be located beneath Naunton Hall. A further scatter, albeit more diffuse than neighbouring spreads of material, may plausibly be identified in the north of Collets and Foxburgh South.

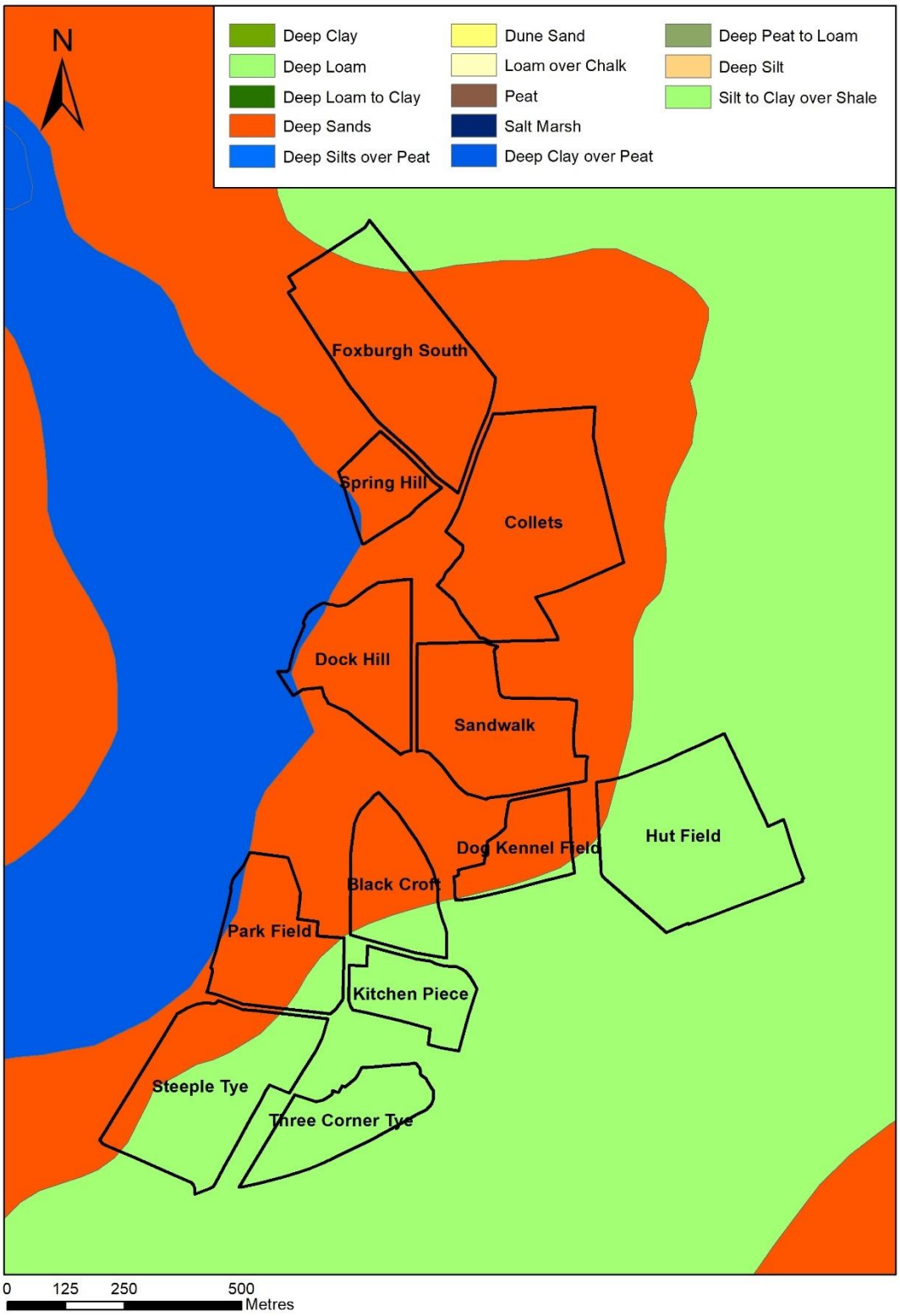

Figure 2.2: The dominant soils of the study area. This key is used throughout the following chapters.

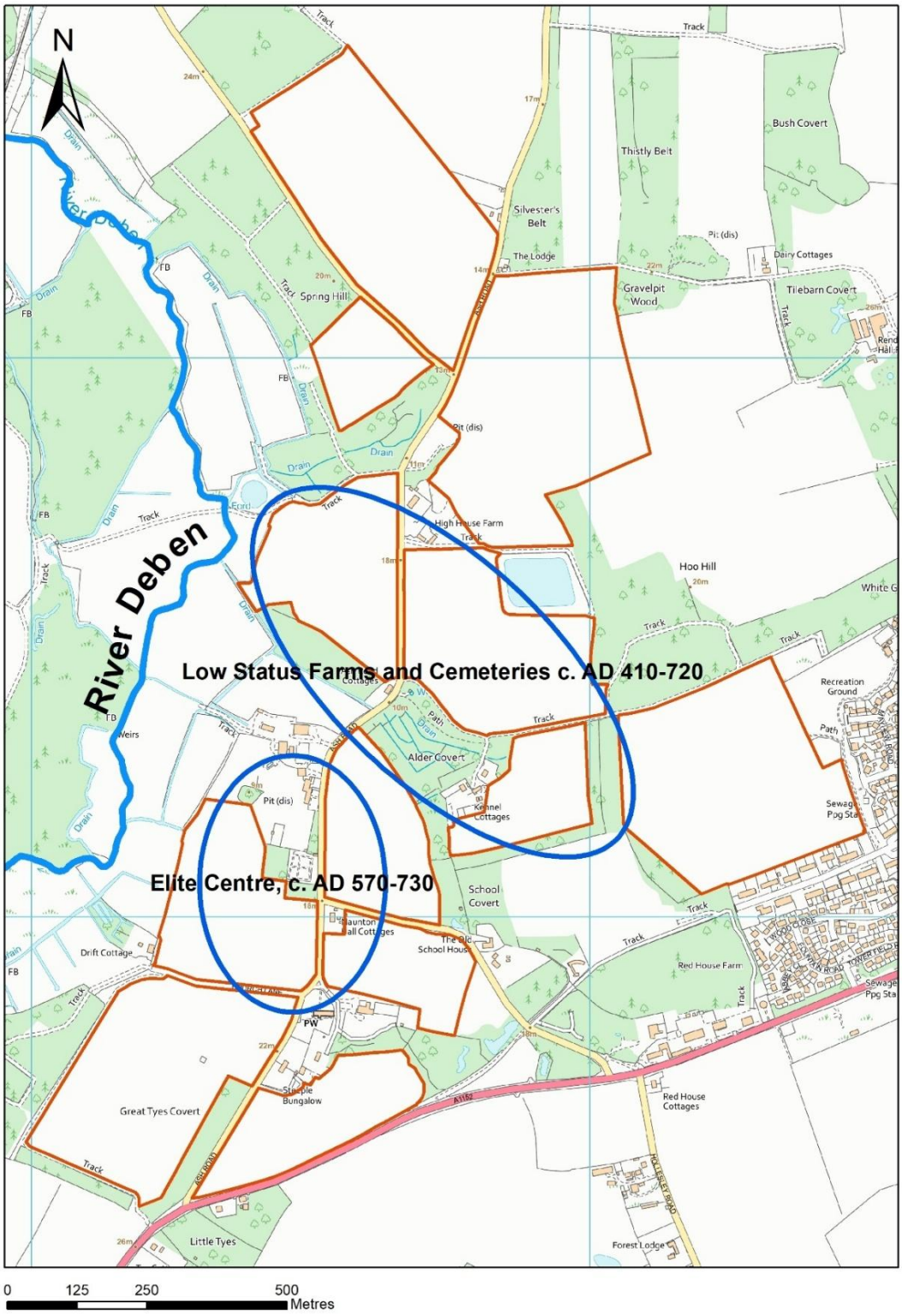

Figure 2.3: the location of the main sites of Early and Middle Saxon activity in the Rendlesham study area. It was in order to understand these sites that the *Lordship and Landscape in Early Medieval East Anglia* and *Rendlesham Revealed* projects were undertaken (after Scull *et al*, 2024)

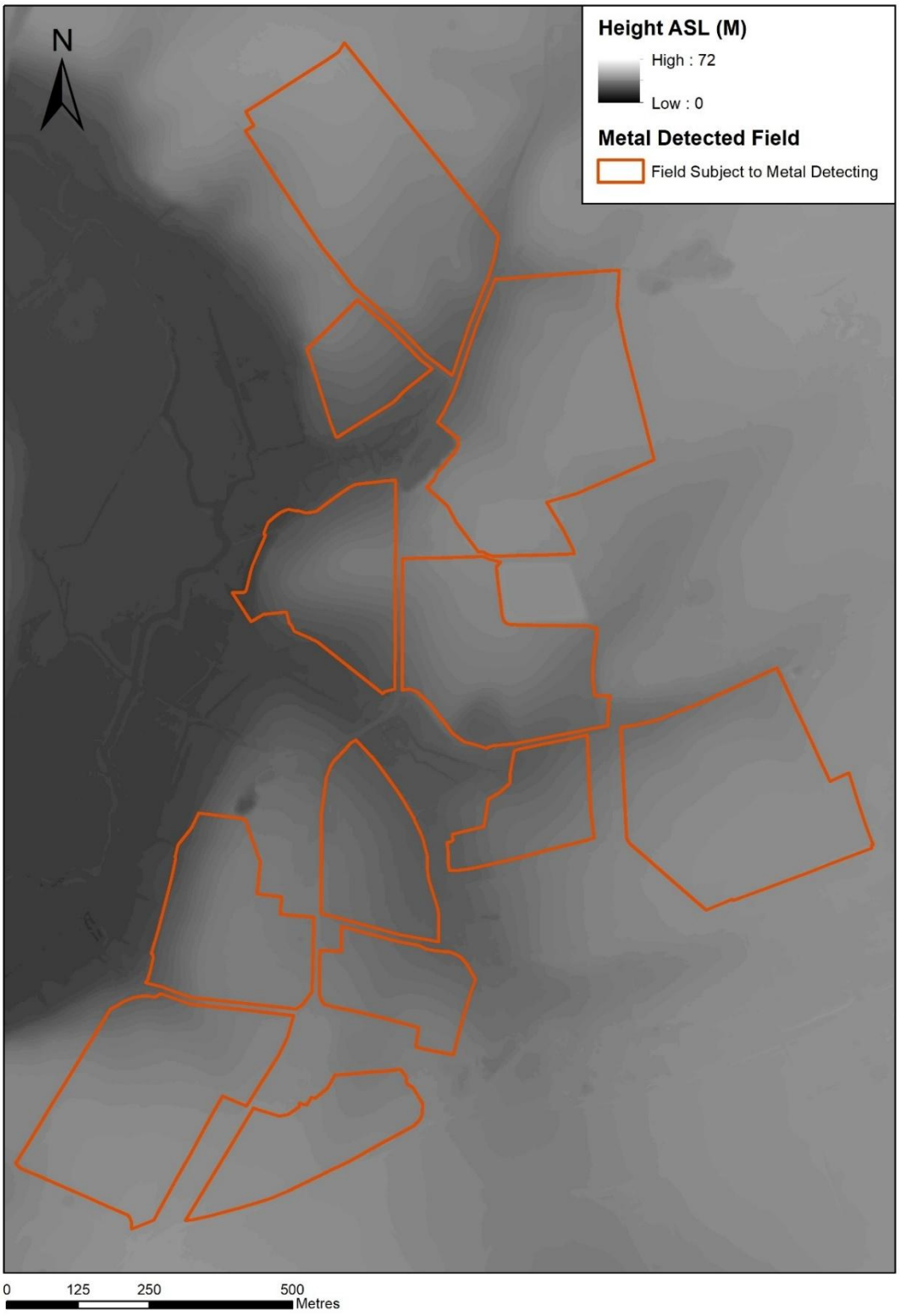

Figure 2.4: The fields of the Rendlesham survey area and their association with topography.

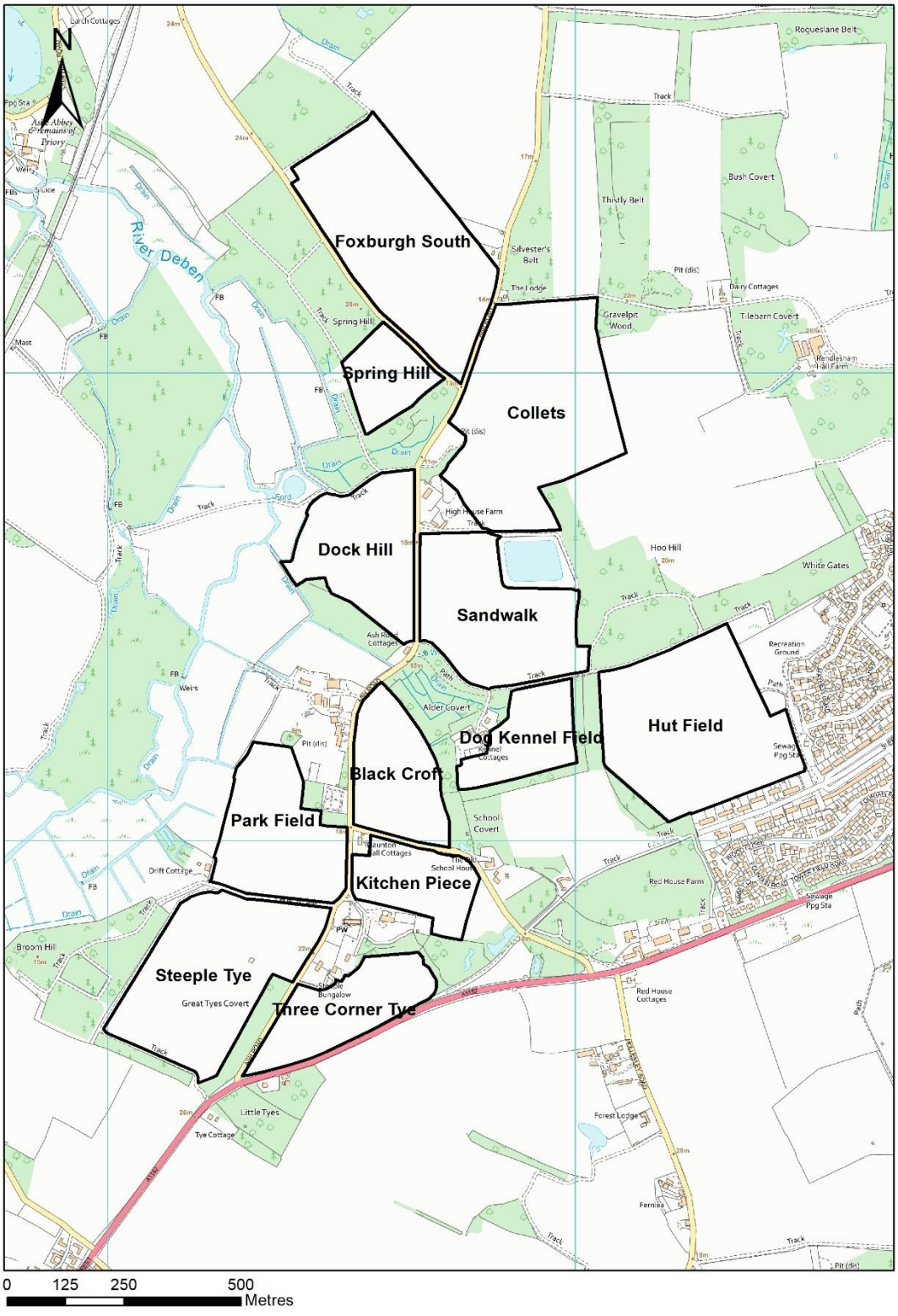

Figure 2.5: The locations of the fields in the Rendlesham survey area (after Minter, Plouviez and Scull 2016). The field names are derived from the Tithe Apportionment maps.

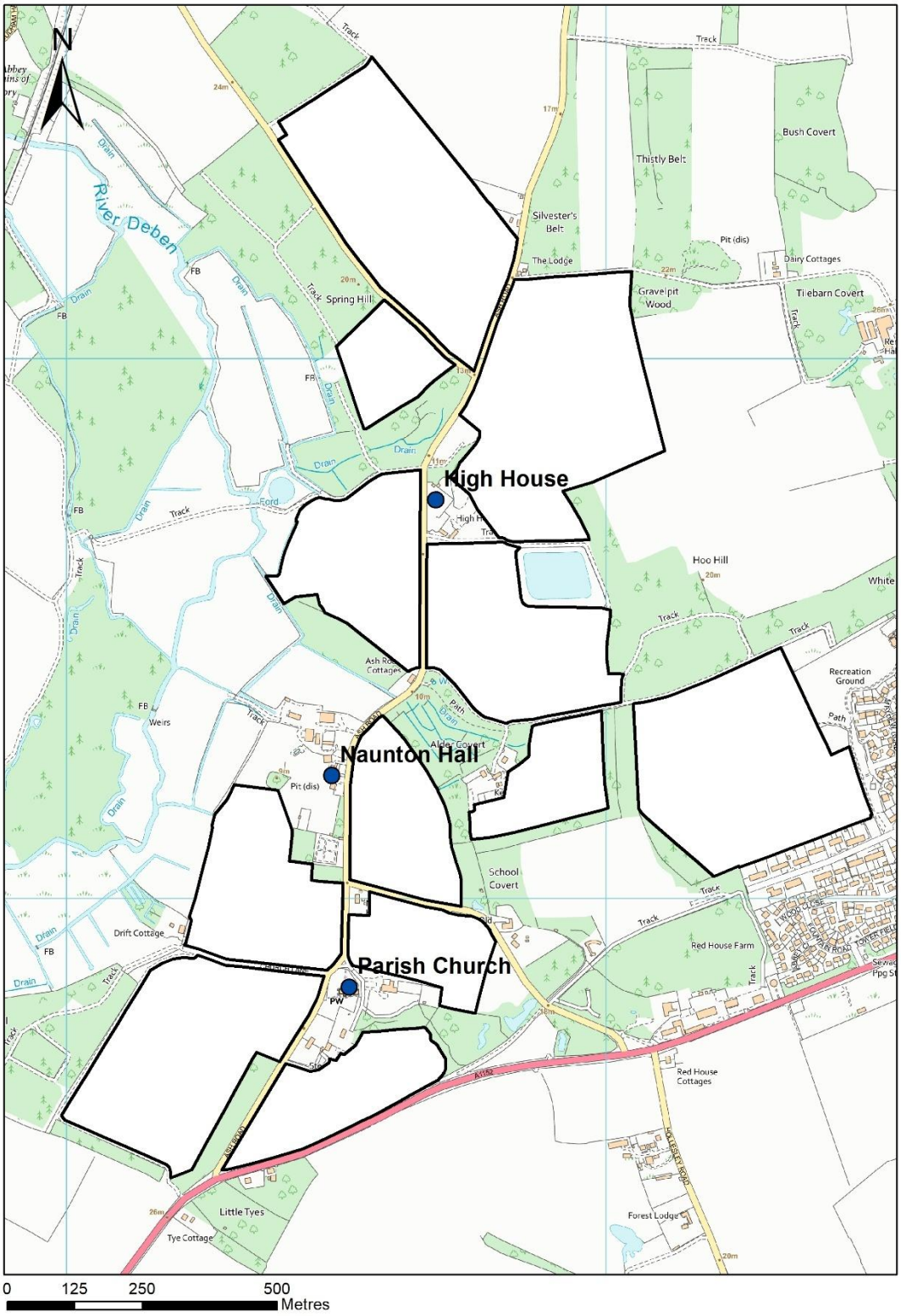

Figure 2.6: The location of the key buildings in the study area.

These dense scatters plausibly represent settlements, although this pottery likely derives from multiple contexts closely associated with the occupation sites. Perhaps the most important of these are the various pits and middens often located adjacent to dwellings, with that at nearby Easton, for example, containing 116 sherds in the limited excavated section.[108] Such middens, once truncated by cultivation, result in the formation of extensive ploughzone assemblages. That much of the pottery from Rendlesham plausibly associated with midden deposits was both larger and less abraded than that recovered from the wider landscape suggests that such material may have been brought relatively recently to the surface from buried archaeological deposits. Although not directly coterminous with the area of settlement, the close proximity of such scatters to occupation sites enables these assemblages to be conflated with occupation. It is here corroborated, therefore, that, as has long been suggested, dense scatters of pottery from the ploughzone may be interpreted as evidence of occupation.

A varied suite of later Roman metalwork has also been recovered, largely comprised of coins but also including artefacts such as bracelets, brooches, and strap fittings.[109] Much of this metalwork is somewhat utilitarian in nature, consisting of copper alloy objects, with only a small number of silver coins identified in the study area.[110] More unusual artefacts, such as a zoomorphic razor handle have, however, also been recovered, the importance of which will be discussed below.[111]

The metalwork assemblage corroborates, challenges and nuances the interpretation of the settlement pattern provided by the ceramic material (Figure 2.8). At a cursory level, the metalwork data is significantly more complex than the pottery, with numerous, dense scatters implying a scale of activity that goes far beyond that suggested by the ceramic assemblage; such evidence seemingly implies, therefore, that there may be a sizeable disconnect between the distribution of pottery and metalwork in the ploughzone. The presence of a number of possible coin hoards, including on Park Field, has, in part, contributed to this lack of clarity.

The unclear patterning in the metalwork dataset may also derive from the Early Saxon reuse of Roman material, with a significant proportion of the Roman material recovered from Rendlesham, particularly coinage pierced for suspension, likely resulting from Early Saxon activity rather than genuine Roman settlement and agriculture; such notions are particularly pertinent for those artefacts recovered from areas of intense activity in the immediate post-

[108] David Adams, *Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation of Land off The Street, Easton, Suffolk*, Unpublished Report no. 2014/1071 (NPS Archaeology, 2015), 32.
[109] 92% of the assemblage is comprised of coins, a pattern largely typical for Suffolk. See Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 127–28.
[110] L&L Finds Catalogue RLM037 1138, RLM044 1301 and RLM044 1461.
[111] L&L Finds Catalogue RLM045 1146.

Roman period.[112] Such reuse of Roman material in the Early Saxon period is attested in numerous settlements and cemeteries in Suffolk and beyond, with the inclusion of Roman material such as brooches, unpierced coinage and belt fittings within funerary deposits, and presumably, therefore, its use by the living, widespread in Early Saxon England.[113]

Such notions are highlighted by the later Roman metalwork assemblage recovered from Sandwalk and Dog Kennel Field. Little later Roman pottery was recovered from either site during the fieldwalking survey, a pattern that is difficult to attribute to recovery bias alone, particularly when it is considered that material from other periods was successfully identified. Yet, despite the apparent paucity of later Roman occupation attested in the fieldwalking data, a dense scatter of metalwork was recovered. Although later Roman activity was apparently limited on these fields, the site formed a core area of immediate post-Roman settlement until at least the eighth century.[114] That this dense scatter of Roman metalwork is associated with intense post-Roman settlement implies that the later collection, curation and reuse of Roman material was a factor in its accumulation on the site. Later Roman artefacts, such as amphora-shaped strap ends, bracelets and knife-handles, each of which have previously been identified in Early Saxon funerary deposits, may plausibly, therefore, be interpreted as evidence of *post*-Roman, rather than *later* Roman, activity.[115] That many of the largest scatters of later Roman metalwork throughout the study area are coterminous with areas of intense Early Saxon activity suggests that the reuse of earlier material in the post-Roman period significantly influenced the formation of ploughzone metalwork scatters (Figure 2.10). Such evidence has important implications for the interpretation of ploughzone assemblages, implying that a linear relationship cannot be assumed between scatters of material and activity in any given period. The inclusion of coins that were centuries old by the time of deposition in medieval hoards suggests that such issues

[112] See, for example, pierced coinage such as L&L Finds Catalogue RLM036 1086 and RLM036 1192.
[113] 289 Roman coins were recovered from the Anglo-Saxon settlement at West Stow, including material dating from the first century. Stanley West, *West Stow, the Anglo-Saxon Village, Suffolk: Volume 1*, no. 24 (East Anglian Archaeology, 1985), 76–81. See also Indra Werthmann, 'The Past in the Past: The Reuse of Roman Objects in Early Anglo-Saxon Society C. Ad 400 - C. 700' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Durham University, 2020).
[114] This activity has been attested by excavation. See Jo Caruth et al., *Rendlesham, Park Field and Sand Walk RLM 054 and 055*, Unpublished Report (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, 2014), 252.
[115] L&L Finds Catalogue RLM044 1041, RLM044 1107 and RLM044 1119.

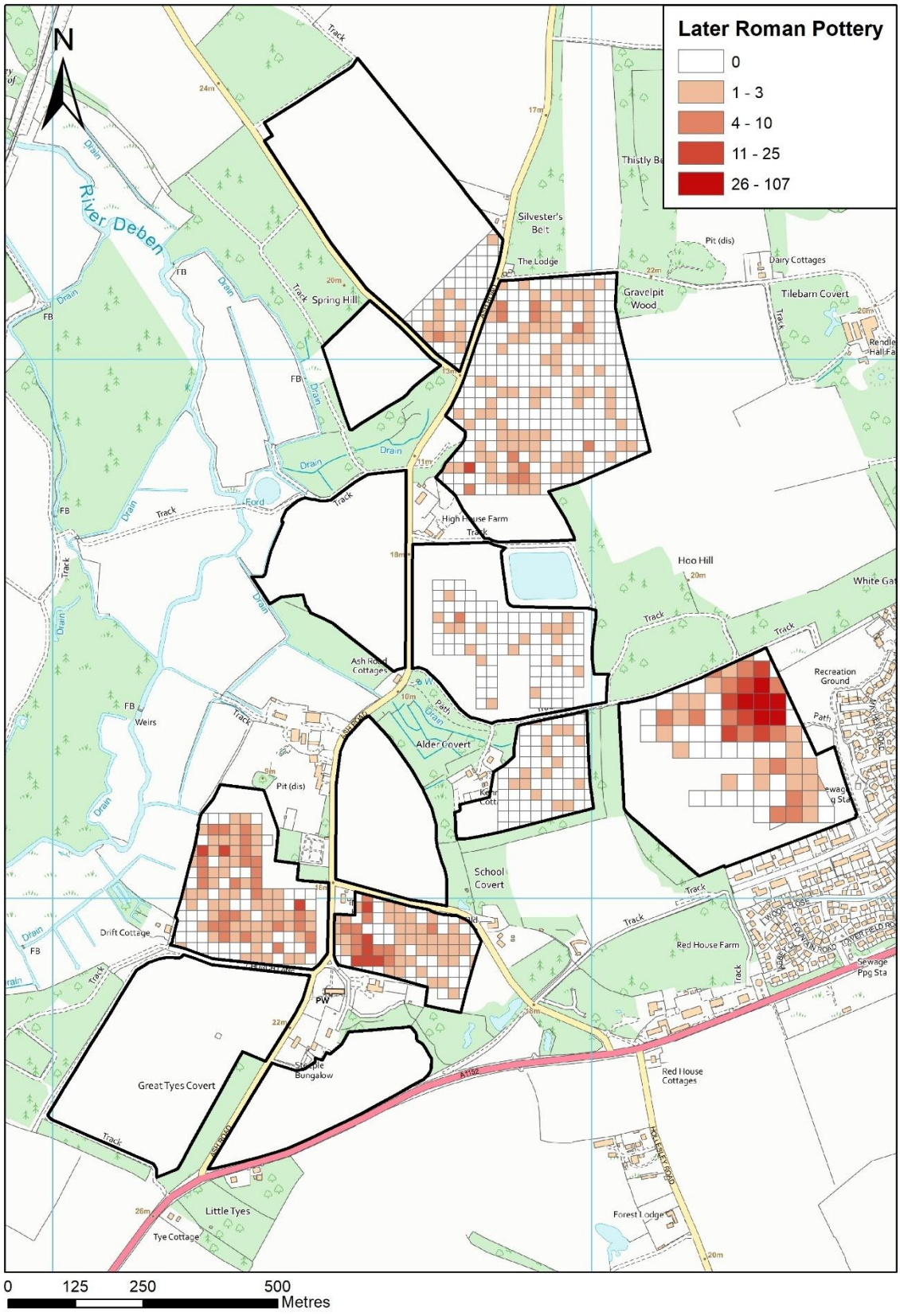

Figure 2.7: The distribution of later Roman pottery in the study area. All fieldwalking data in Chapter Two is based upon the results of the *Rendlesham Revealed* project, as well as surveys undertaken by the present author.

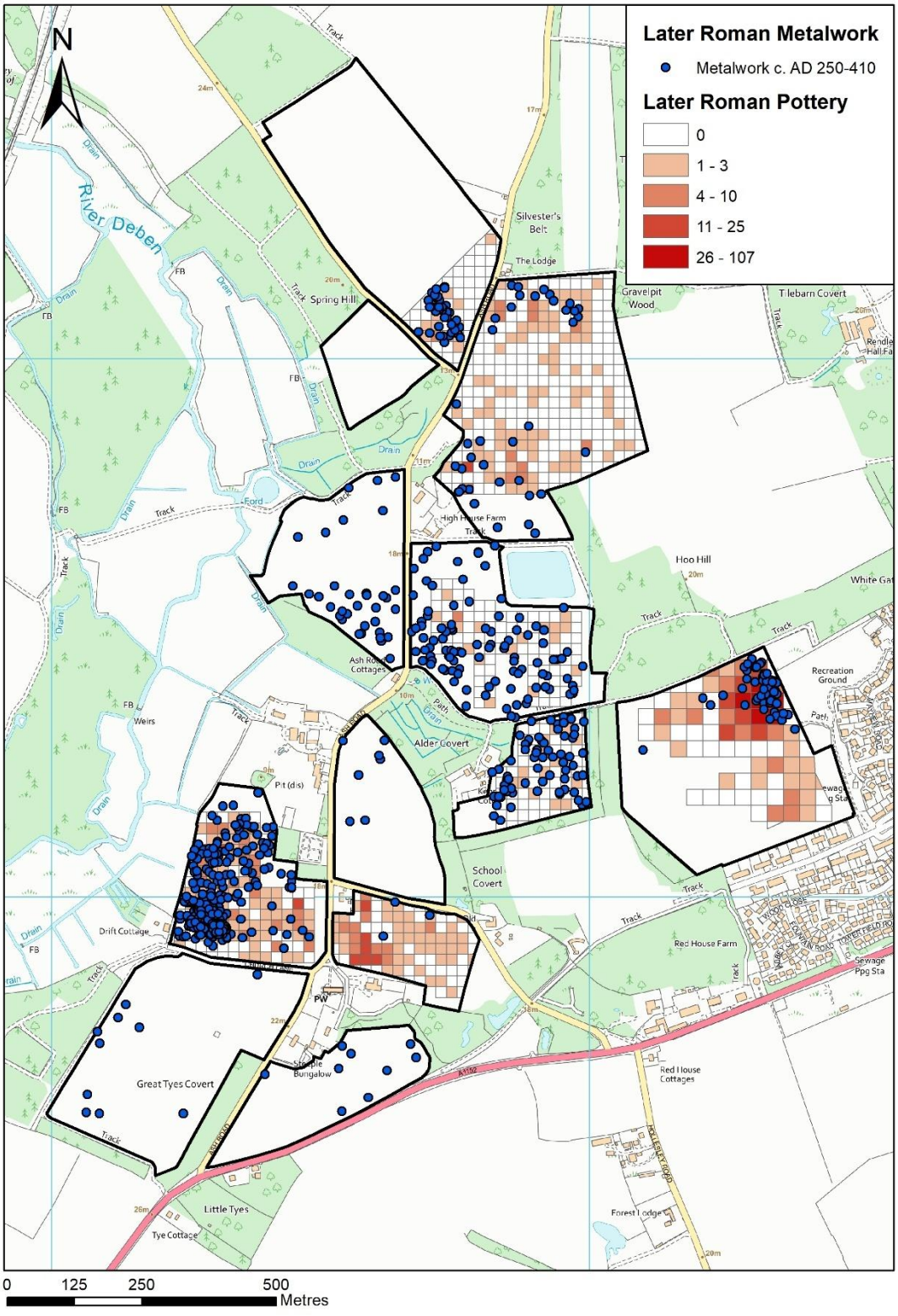

Figure 2.8: The distribution of later Roman metalwork and its association with the pottery assemblage. The Rendlesham metalwork data used throughout Chapter Two is from the *Lordship and Landscape in Early Medieval East Anglia* project and is used by kind permission of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service.

Figure 2.9: the Church of St Gregory the Great, Rendlesham, surrounded by non-arable land use.

are also prevalent in other periods.[116] While, as noted in Chapter One, metalwork scatters from the plough soil offer opportunities to closely date activity in the countryside, that material may have been deposited long after it was produced must be considered throughout the following analysis.

At a superficial level, the association between those dense scatters of pottery interpreted above as evidence of occupation and scatters of metalwork is somewhat inconsistent; while the site to the north of Park Field is denoted by a sizeable scatter of metalwork, the settlement located in the southwest of Kitchen Piece is marked by a noticeable paucity of material, for example. Such a pattern is superficially perplexing; yet this variability underpins the importance of considering both pottery and metalwork scatters together in a single study.

It can be suggested that the scatter of metalwork, comprised of a diverse range of artefacts, coterminous with the ceramically-attested settlement site in Park Field was the farmstead or household of a relatively wealthy family, perhaps of local significance, although it is likely that some of this material was deposited in the post-Roman period. Greater levels of wealth offered both the opportunity to purchase large quantities of material culture from local market centres such as Hacheston, as well as to possess objects of higher quality than those of lower status. With more of this metalwork in circulation in these elite settlements, greater potential for material to enter the plough soil and become incorporated into ploughzone deposits existed, resulting in the formation of larger ploughzone deposits associated with elite settlements compared to non-elite sites. In essence, large scatters of metalwork can be associated with high-status settlement, although the scale of the population and the longevity of activity, can also clearly impact the quantities of material recovered. Similar patterns are attested in excavations elsewhere; high-status sites, such as the Godmanchester villa are marked by a large and diverse range of metal artefacts recovered during excavations, while rural farmsteads, as at Cedars Park, Stowmarket, are characterised by only limited metalwork evidence.[117] Such evidence both implies that metalwork scatters offer insight into patterns of social differentiation in the past, as well as suggesting that attempts to understand the development of the landscape solely through the lens of metalwork may overlook low status farmsteads.

[116] See, for example PAS LVPL-C920E4, an early-sixteenth-century coin hoard in which coinage from the reign of Edward II was included.
[117] Compare Kate Nicholson et al., *A Late Iron Age and Romano-British Farmstead at Cedars Park, Stowmarket, Suffolk* (East Anglian Archaeology, 2016), 91–100; Alice Lyons, *Rectory Farm, Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire: Excavations 1988–95, Neolithic Monument to Roman Villa Farm*, no. 170 (East Anglian Archaeology, 2019), 177–86.

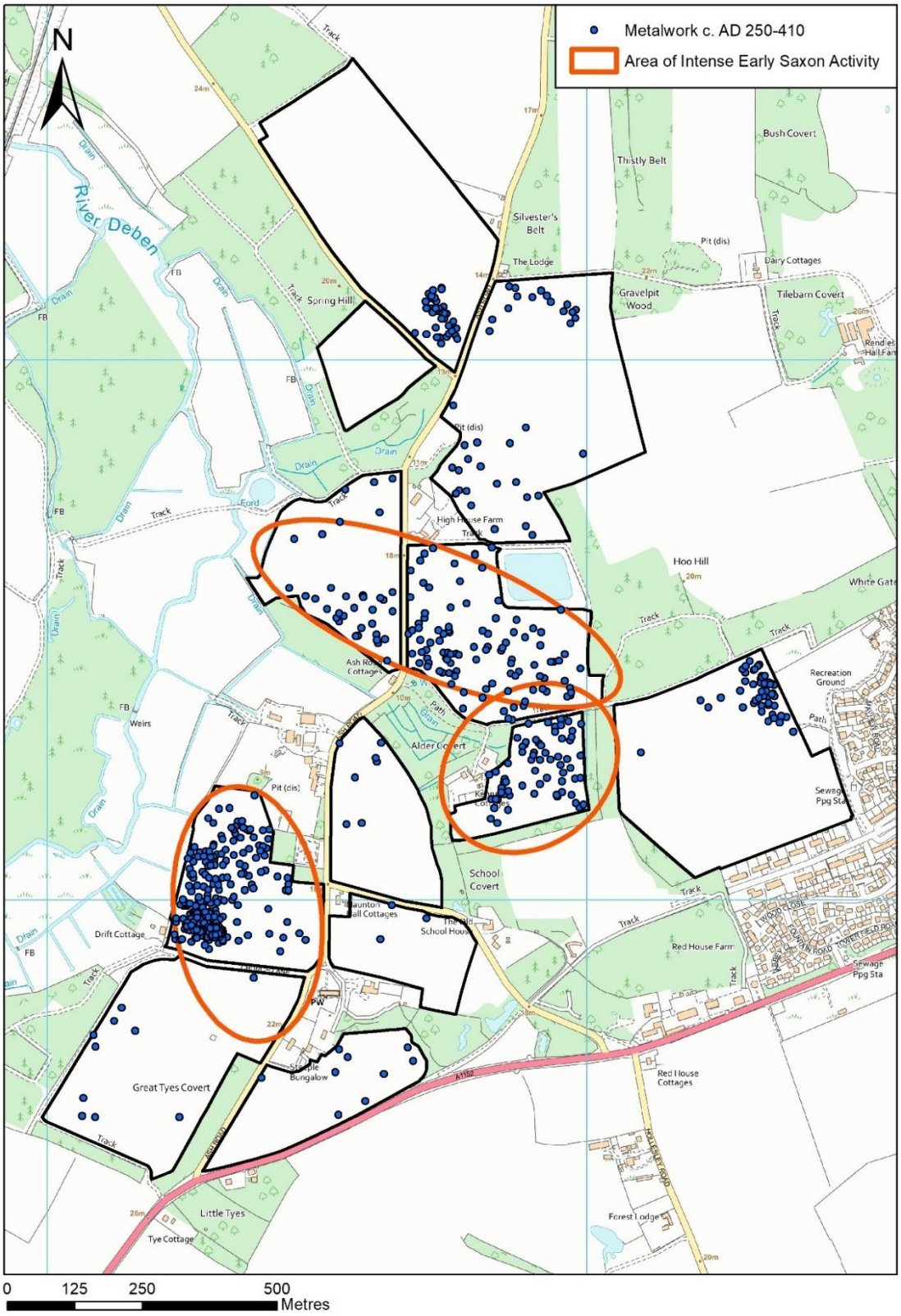

Figure 2.10: The distribution of later Roman metalwork in the study area and its association with Early and Middle Saxon activity. It is clear that many of the densest scatters of Roman metalwork are also associated with areas of Early and Middle Saxon settlement.

Much of this material may have been dropped on the old ground surface, while a proportion was also likely incorporated into middens and ditches surrounding settlement sites either through accidental loss, a process which accounts for those objects such as coins that are unlikely to be disposed of, or through the discarding of unneeded or broken items. Similar patterns have been noted elsewhere throughout Suffolk and beyond.[118] Such suggestions have important implications for the interpretation of cultivation through ploughzone scatters, as will be suggested below.

While the Park Field and Foxburgh South sites are marked by plentiful metalwork, the Kitchen Piece site is poorly represented in this dataset, implying that the site was relatively poor, perhaps the household of a peasant proprietor, potentially farming a small holding or working the lands of the wealthier site to the north.

Significantly, those assemblages associated with elite households appear to be characterised by a more diverse suite of material culture, including precious metal coinage, albeit in limited numbers. While the Kitchen Piece assemblage is comprised of a small number of copper alloy coinage and a single bracelet fragment,[119] the Park Field site is marked by a wider range of artefacts including finger rings, strap fittings and silver *siliqua,* although copper alloy nummi and bracelets have also been recovered from the site.[120] In short, it appears that the both quantity of material, as well as its quality and diversity, demarcated status in the later Roman rural landscape.

It is clear that only through the incorporation of pottery and metalwork into a single study can full interpretation of past landscapes be achieved. Both the Kitchen Piece and Park Field sites were characterised by relatively ubiquitous spreads of pottery, with the exception of a single sherd of abraded Samian ware recovered from the north of Park Field. Had only the fieldwalking dataset been considered, there would have been little to differentiate the relative wealth of the two sites. Yet, if the landscape of Rendlesham was explored exclusively through the lens of metalwork, the settlement site in Kitchen Field would have been overlooked entirely. In short, only through the incorporation of both pottery and metalwork assemblages into a single study can the most accurate perception of the landscape be obtained.

While the metalwork scatters representative of settlement on Foxburgh South, Collets and Park Field are somewhat congruent in terms of composition, these assemblages clearly differ from

[118] Daubney, *Palimpsests*, 112.
[119] L&L Finds Catalogue RLM014 1111, RLM014 1107 and RLM014 1137.
[120] L&L Finds Catalogue RLM013 0167, RLM013 0174 and RLM013 0984.

that recovered from Hut Field. As suggested above, the dense scatter of pottery in Hut Field can be interpreted as evidence of settlement; indeed, at a cursory level, the metalwork assemblage appears to highlight this as a settlement of significant wealth, marked by a large but spatially discrete scatter of material. Later pottery assemblages suggest that this site witnessed little post-Roman occupation, implying that such patterns are likely representative of genuine later Roman activity on the site. Yet, the nature of this assemblage is atypical. While the Foxburgh South and Park Field assemblages are comprised of a mixed suite of artefacts, the Hut Field assemblage is made up almost entirely of coins, with the exception of two atypical artefacts, including a zoomorphic razor handle.[121] Such artefacts are best interpreted as the result of votive deposition. Although few small rural shrines of the Rendlesham type have been excavated, the metalwork assemblage is comparable to other Roman religious sites such as Uley and Henley Wood, Gloucestershire.[122] While the pottery scatter from the site would, without the metalwork evidence, have been considered as evidence of domestic occupation, the metal detecting data enables the activities occurring in the landscape to be refined.

Although presenting differing images of the past, the perception of Roman settlement presented by pottery is not, on the whole, incompatible with that suggested by scatters of metalwork. While pottery clearly denotes those areas of intense activity, largely representing settlements but also reflecting other activities such as ritual deposition, metalwork enables the function, wealth and status of sites to be ascertained. This wealth and status is denoted for many rural sites by both the quantity of material as well as its quality and diversity. In essence, each of these datasets must be considered together for complete understanding of the historic landscape to be gained.

Ploughzone Assemblages and Later Roman Agriculture

It is widely accepted that thin scatters of pottery can be interpreted as the residue of manuring, the result of household refuse being brought to the arable landscape in order to restore fertility to intensively cropped lands.[123] The association between metalwork scatters and arable agriculture is, on the other hand, much less clear.

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[121] A second-century zoomorphic hippocamp brooch was recovered from the site, also associated with religious activity. See L&L Finds Catalogue RLM045 1145.

[122] Lorna Watts and Peter Leach, *Henley Wood, Temples and Cemetery: Excavations 1962 - 69 by the Late Ernest Greenfield & Others* (Council for British Archaeology, 1996), 76–134; Ann Woodward and Peter Leach, *The Uley Shrines: Excavation of a Ritual Complex on West Hill, Uley, Gloucestershire 1977-9.* (English Heritage Archaeological Reports, 1993).

[123] T. J. Wilkinson, 'The Definition of Ancient Manured Zones by Means of Extensive Sherd-Sampling Techniques', *Journal of Field Archaeology* 9 (1982): 323–33, world.

The pottery assemblage suggests that the centres of activity highlighted above were located within an extensive arable landscape that was cultivated with varying intensity. A wide variety of environments appear to have been under the plough in the later Roman period, ranging from the light, relatively fertile sands of the Newport 2 Association to the heavier soils of the Burlingham 3 Association. Some areas, such as the south of Park Field and east of Kitchen Piece, were apparently cultivated relatively intensively, as attested by the density of manuring scatters in the area, while fields such as Sandwalk and Dog Kennel Field appear to have been cultivated, or manured at the very least, only sporadically, with fertility perhaps restored to the soil through other means, such as direct manuring using livestock, a strategy that leaves little trace in the archaeological record (Figure 2.11). Such a pattern is superficially perplexing. Park Field and Sandwalk both occupy similar environmental positions, both in terms of soils and topography; it is apparently unclear why Park Field should have been more intensively manured than nearby Sandwalk.

It is here that the distance decay model of manuring comes to the fore. It has long been noted that those areas closest to settlement sites are liable to receive the greatest share of household manure, while those fields furthest from farmsteads were manured less frequently or were fertilised through other means, such as the folding of livestock.[124] It can, therefore, be suggested that Park Field was more intensively manured as it lay in close proximity to two occupation sites, forming the core of their agricultural territory. Sandwalk and Dog Kennel Field, meanwhile, lay relatively far from the occupation sites on Kitchen Piece and Park Field. As such, these sites received comparatively less household manure, due to the additional effort required to cart manure to the site, resulting in less pottery entering the plough soil. Although such patterns have previously been noted, this model proves significant for understanding the association between metalwork and arable farming.

[124] Gerrard, 'Misplaced Faith?', 69–70.

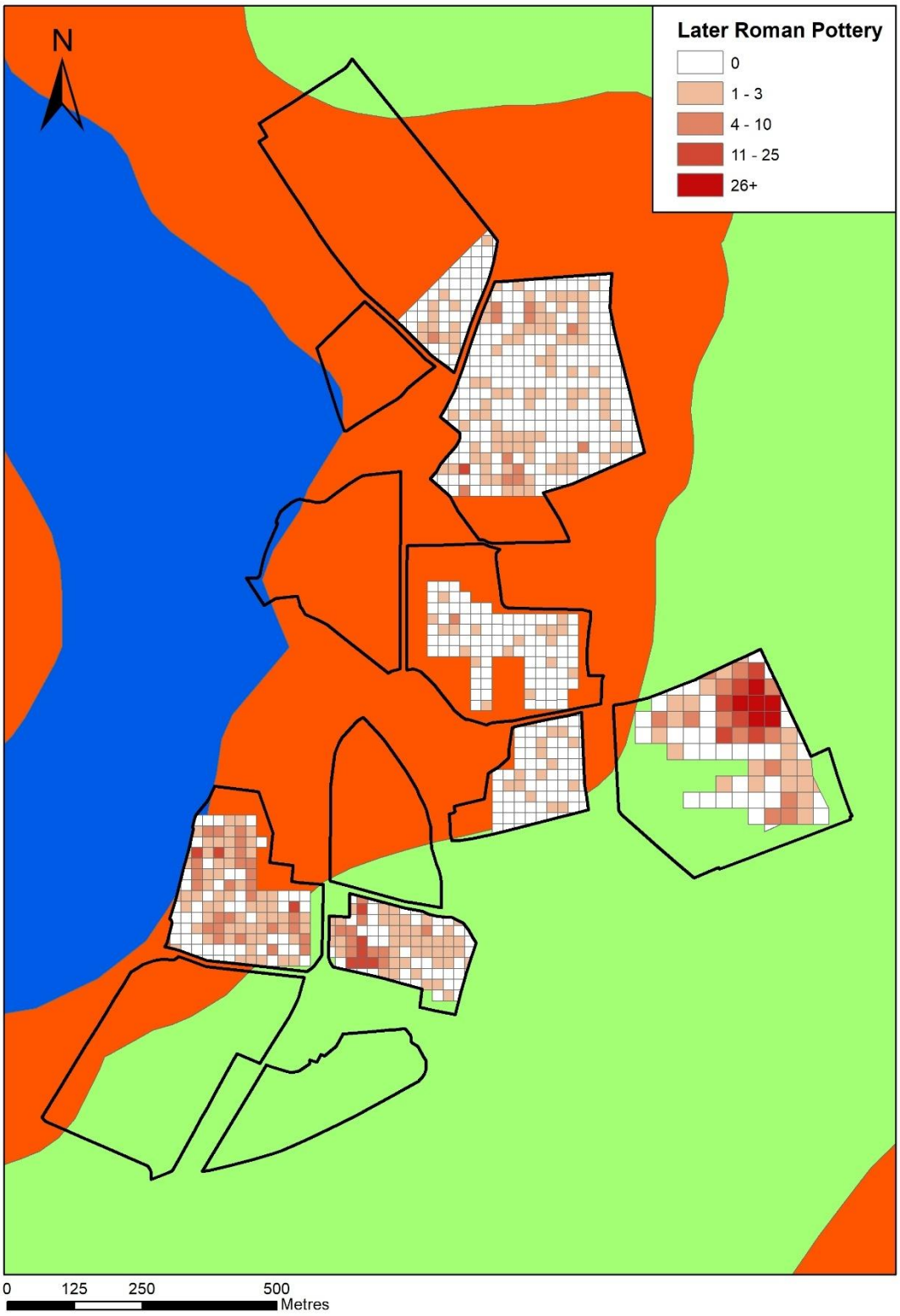

Figure 2.11: The distribution of later Roman pottery scatters in the study area and their association with the dominant soils of the area.

While diffuse scatters of pottery are often interpreted as evidence of manuring, the relationship between scatters of metalwork and historic agriculture is somewhat less clear.[125] Although the impact of the post-Roman reuse of Roman metalwork must be considered throughout the following discussion, thin scatters of metalwork occur in those areas in which pottery scatters, cropmarks and geophysical survey suggests that cultivation and manuring took place, such as Kitchen Field and Collets. Such a pattern suggests that these diffuse spreads of metalwork may similarly be interpreted as the result of historic manuring (Figure 2.12).

The distribution of material within the study area further corroborates the conflation of thin scatters of metalwork with arable agriculture. Those diffuse scatters of later Roman metalwork that are not associated with zones of post-Roman activity are largely confined to areas of amenable soils, that is those Newport 2 and sloping areas of Burlingham 3 soils. While more agriculturally marginal areas were brought under the plough in the later Roman period, such as level areas of Hut Field, as evidenced by the thin spread of pottery recovered from the south of the site, it is apparent that the most attractive soils were intensively cultivated and, therefore, repeatedly spread with household manure. In such circumstances, large amounts of midden material were brought to the fields, material which, as suggested above, contained both pottery and metalwork. That these thin spreads of metalwork occur in those most agriculturally attractive areas suggests that these scatters can plausibly be interpreted as the residue of manuring. This material also conforms to the distance decay model of manuring laid out above; it is reasonable to suggest, therefore, that there is a hitherto unrecognised association between scatters of metalwork in the plough soil and areas of arable cultivation.

While thin spreads of metalwork may be interpreted as the residue of manuring, there are issues in differentiating metalwork manuring scatters from those artefacts lost during the management of herds of livestock, particularly in the absence of fieldwalking data. The composition of each assemblage may, in many cases, enable these activities to be differentiated from manuring scatters. Livestock husbandry assemblages largely consist of personal possessions such as buckles and strap fittings, those artefacts routinely worn and carried during agricultural activity,[126] while objects more plausibly lost within occupation sites, such as coins, cosmetic implements and furniture mounts, are, meanwhile, likely to derive from the manuring

[125] Daubney, *Palimpsests*, 78–79.
[126] See, for example, L&L Finds Catalogue RLM037 1150 and RLM037 1271.

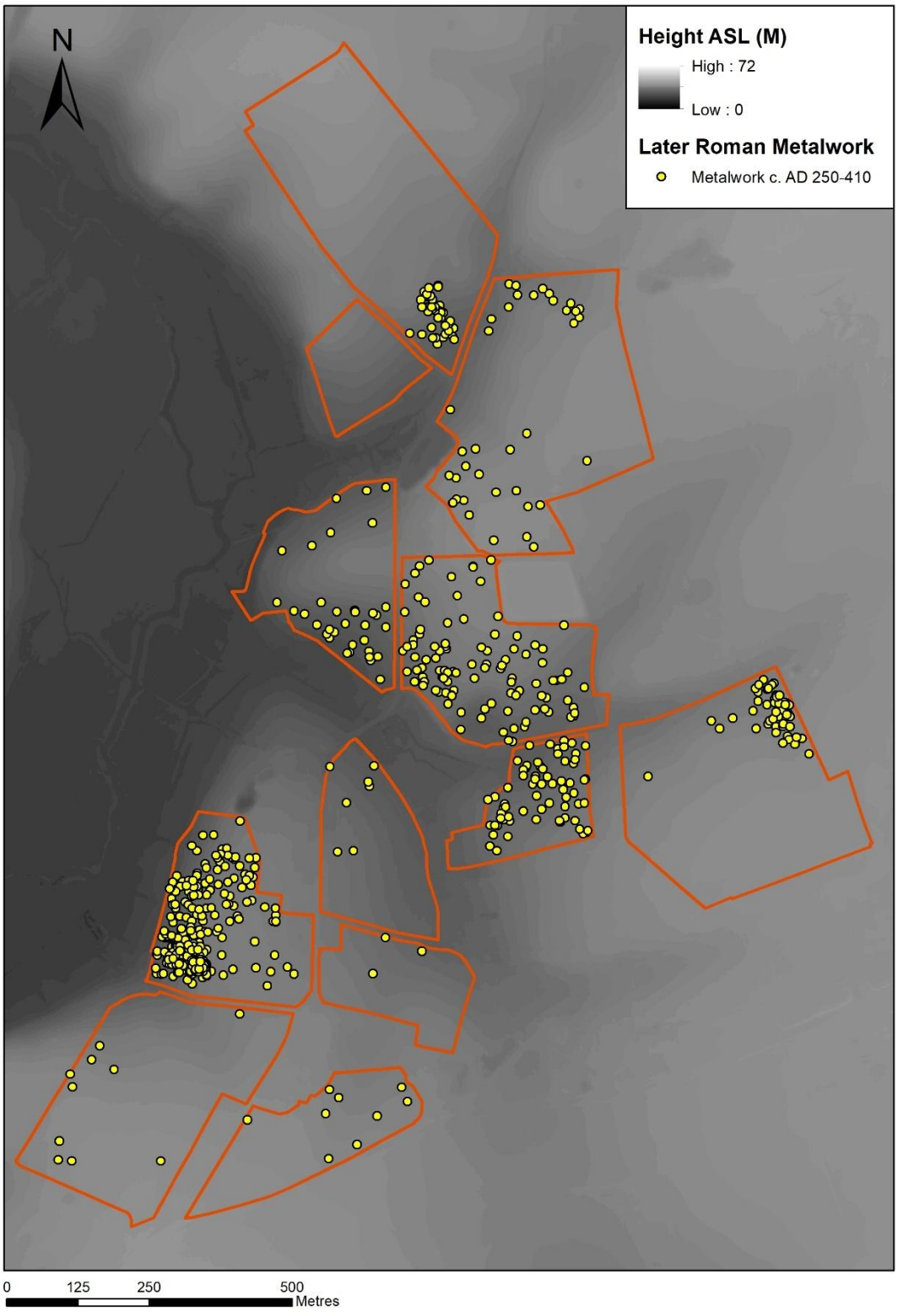

Figure 2.12: The distribution of later Roman metalwork in the study area and its association with topography.

of arable fields, incorporated into middens before becoming spread across the arable landscape to restore fertility to intensively cropped fields.[127] Richard Jones has suggested that the pottery contained within middens surrounding settlement sites is directly reflected in those deposits recovered from former arable areas;[128] such notions must be extended to metalwork.

Up to this point, it has been proposed that both pottery and metalwork scatters can be employed to understand arable farming in the past. Yet, it has been highlighted above that the quantity and quality of metalwork contained within settlement deposits is dependent on the levels of material wealth present within the occupation site. The implications of such notions upon the interpretation of arable farming in ploughzone assemblages must here be considered.

If those dense scatters of metalwork coterminous with large quantities of pottery are best interpreted as wealthy settlements, then it is reasonable to suggest that thin scatters of metalwork, coterminous with diffuse scatters of pottery, may represent the fields farmed from such wealthy sites. With greater quantities of metalwork in circulation within high-status settlements, it is inevitable that more material was lost both within the settlement site, as well as incorporated into middens and rubbish deposits; such material, when employed as manure, leaves thin scatters of metalwork within the arable countryside.[129] Diffuse pottery scatters not coterminous with spreads of metalwork may, on the other hand, derive from the use of manure from low status farmsteads. In short, while pottery scatters are clearly associated with areas of cultivation, regardless of the wealth of the site from which they were farmed, the extent of metalwork manuring scatters is plausibly dependent on the wealth of the settlement from which the manure was derived and may, therefore, enable patterns of landholding in the past to be discerned.

Other activities also underpin the formation of metalwork scatters in areas of cultivation, including the loss of material when undertaking work in the fields. Agricultural activities such as ploughing, weeding and sowing are labour intensive, requiring large numbers of labourers to be in the fields over long periods of time; such activities account for some of those objects, particularly personal possessions and dress accessories, that have been recovered from what was apparently part of the arable landscape. Thin spreads personal possessions are likely the

[127] It is in this context that finds such as L&L Finds Catalogue RLM037 1129 and RLM043 1149 can be seen.
[128] Jones, 'Signatures', 165–67.
[129] It is in this context that artefacts such as L&L Finds Catalogue RLM044 1305, RLM038 1306 and RLM037 1459 can be understood.

residue of work undertaken within arable fields, although the possibility that these objects entered the plough soil with manure cannot be discounted.

Significantly, the distribution of metalwork representative of agricultural work can also be used to identify areas of the landscape held by the higher ranks of society. High-status landowners were likely able to employ large numbers of labourers, particularly at bottlenecks in the agricultural year, such as harvest. With substantial numbers of workers operating in the landscape, greater opportunity was present for material to become incorporated into ploughzone assemblages. Peasant farmers, however, may have had access to smaller labour reserves, perhaps only the kin group; such limited quantities of labourers, residing in apparently impoverished settlements, at least in terms of metalwork, were less likely to lose metalwork artefacts while working in the arable fields. The extent of metalwork scatters in arable areas can, therefore, again be associated with the relative wealth of the settlement from which it was farmed.

As noted above, however, a linear relationship between thin scatters of metalwork and arable cultivation cannot be assumed; many complex processes have contributed to the formation of ploughzone assemblages. Thin scatters of metalwork can be interpreted as the aggregate accumulation of material lost in areas in which activity took place over long periods of time. While some of this material was inevitably lost during work in the arable landscape, a proportion may also have been dropped while managing herds of livestock in paddocks and grazing grounds. Thin scatters of personal possessions such as strap fittings, brooches and pins can, therefore, be interpreted as casual losses made in the pastoral landscape.

Separating these objects from material lost during arable farming is problematic. The incorporation of both pottery and metalwork into a single study offers, however, the opportunity to differentiate those scatters representing arable cultivation from those representing livestock husbandry. Thin scatters of metalwork recovered from areas in which no ceramic material has been recovered, suggestive of limited cultivation and manuring, can plausibly be identified as deriving from livestock management, while those scatters coterminous with spreads of pottery are, more likely, the result of cultivation. Again, only though the integration of both pottery and metalwork into a single study can full interpretation of the landscape be achieved.

Settlement, Cemeteries and Early Saxon Ploughzone Assemblages

While the scale of the dataset and range of survey techniques employed enables the Rendlesham case study area to offer significant insight into the taphonomic pathways influencing the development of Early Saxon ploughzone assemblages, the impact of the atypical nature of activity on the site must be noted. Fifth-century activity on the site was marked by the presence of a warrior elite, while, by the end of the sixth century, Rendlesham sat at the apex of an extensive network of trade and resource extraction, gathering tribute from a wide territory.[130] Although the relevance of this dataset for the small rural farmsteads typical of the post-Roman archaeology of East Anglia can be questioned, the scale of the fieldwalking and metal detecting dataset, and the integration of other survey techniques, enables tentative conclusions to be drawn.

The ceramic data presents an unclear picture of settlement and funerary activity in Rendlesham (Figure 2.13). Three relatively dense pottery scatters are evident in the study area, located on Park Field, Dog Kennel Field and Sandwalk. Yet, while both metal detecting and excavation have attested the presence of a wide suite of activities ranging from long-lived settlements and cemeteries to the residences of peripatetic kings, there is little variation in the pottery scatters recovered from each of these sites.

The material from Sandwalk illustrates such issues. Excavation has demonstrated the presence of both settlement and funerary activity on the site,[131] yet there is apparently little variation in the distribution of pottery. Indeed, fifth-to-eighth-century settlements are often denoted by only small spreads of pottery; differentiating this settlement evidence from the intensive manuring of infields or garden plots presents further issues. The pottery assemblage, although highlighting potential areas of intense activity, presents few opportunities to interpret the varied activities that took place in the landscape.[132]

[130] Christopher Scull et al., 'Social and Economic Complexity in Early Medieval England: A Central Place Complex of the East Anglian Kingdom at Rendlesham, Suffolk', *Antiquity* 90 (2016): 1594–612.
[131] Caruth et al., *RLM 054 and 055*.
[132] The presence of decorated urn sherds may help differentiate settlements from cemeteries. Many cremation urns had pre-burial domestic uses, however, limiting opportunities to separate settlements from cemeteries using pottery scatters alone. See Gareth Perry, 'United in Death: The Pre-Burial Origins of Anglo-Saxon Cremation Urns' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, 2013).

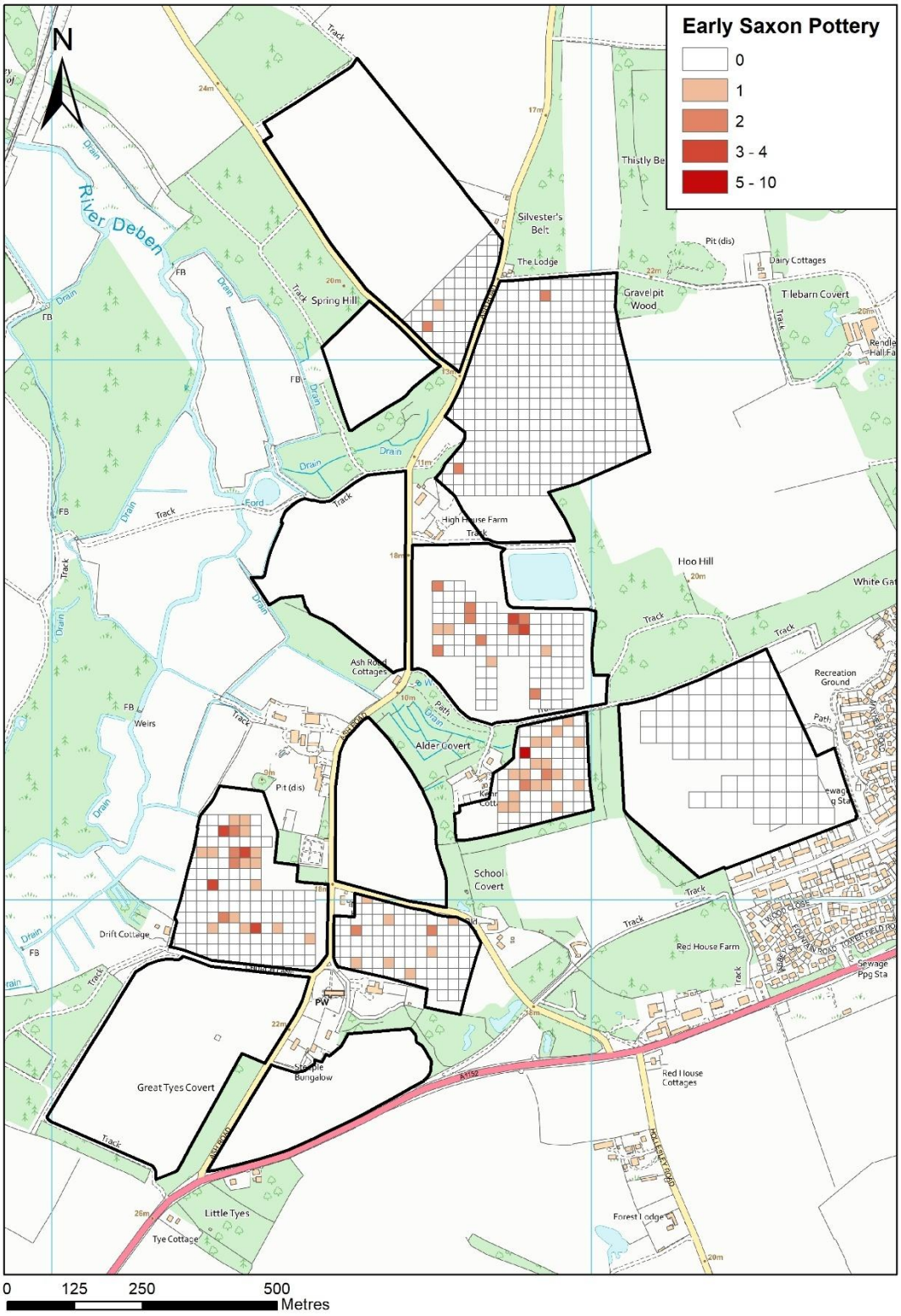

Figure 2.13: The distribution of Early Anglo-Saxon pottery in the Rendlesham case study area.

Figure 2.14: overlooking the site of the Early Saxon elite centre at Rendlesham.

The corpus of metalwork from the study area offers the opportunity to refine the view of the landscape presented by the fieldwalking dataset (Figure 2.15). The metalwork assemblage from Rendlesham is comprised of an atypically wide range of artefacts, including objects associated with elite activity such as precious metal jewellery, weapon fittings and personal possessions such as buckles.[133] The majority of the assemblage consists, however, of more utilitarian items typical of other fifth-to-eighth-century settlements and cemeteries, such as copper alloy brooches, pins and wrist clasps, albeit in much greater quantities than other contemporary sites.[134] This scatter of metalwork is at its most dense in Sandwalk and Dog Kennel Field, areas of long-lived settlement and funerary activity attested via excavation. These metalwork scatters appear to present significant problems; much like the ceramic data, there is apparently little variation in the metalwork assemblages between the main centres of post-Roman activity. Yet, subtle variations in the assemblages allow insight into the activities represented in metalwork assemblages.

At a most basic level, the metalwork scatter on Sandwalk varies in density across the site, with a particularly dense cluster in the centre of the field, coterminous with a limited concentration of pottery. This metalwork scatter is surrounded by a more diffuse spread of material to the south and west, areas in which a thin spread of pottery has also been recovered. The dense metalwork scatter is largely comprised of personal possessions such as brooches, girdle hangers and wrist clasps, many of which are burned, likely evidence of the cemetery attested through excavation (Figure 2.16).[135] Similar assemblages have been recovered from cemeteries throughout East Anglia, such as nearby Snape, as well as Spong Hill in Norfolk.[136] The less dense scatter lying to the east is somewhat different in character, comprised of buckles, pins and coinage, an assemblage

[133] See, for example, L&L Finds Catalogue RLM013 0892 and RLM044 1027.
[134] See, for example, L&L Finds Catalogue RLM036 1322, RLM044 1376 and RLM044 1783. Compare with Alice Lyons, *Life and Afterlife at Duxford, Cambridgeshire: Archaeology and History in a Chalkland Community*, no. 141 (East Anglian Archaeology, 2011), 97; West, *West Stow, Vol 1*, 122–24.
[135] L&L Finds Catalogue RLM044 1457, RLM044 1500 and RLM044 1773. For the excavation, see Caruth et al., *RLM 054 and 055*.
[136] William Filmer-Sankey and Tim Pestell, *Snape Anglo-Saxon Cemetery: Excavations and Surveys 1824–1992*, no. 95 (East Anglian Archaeology, 2001), 179; Catherine Hills, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Spong Hill, North Elmham, Part I: Catalogue of Cremations* (East Anglian Archaeology, 1977), 23–27.

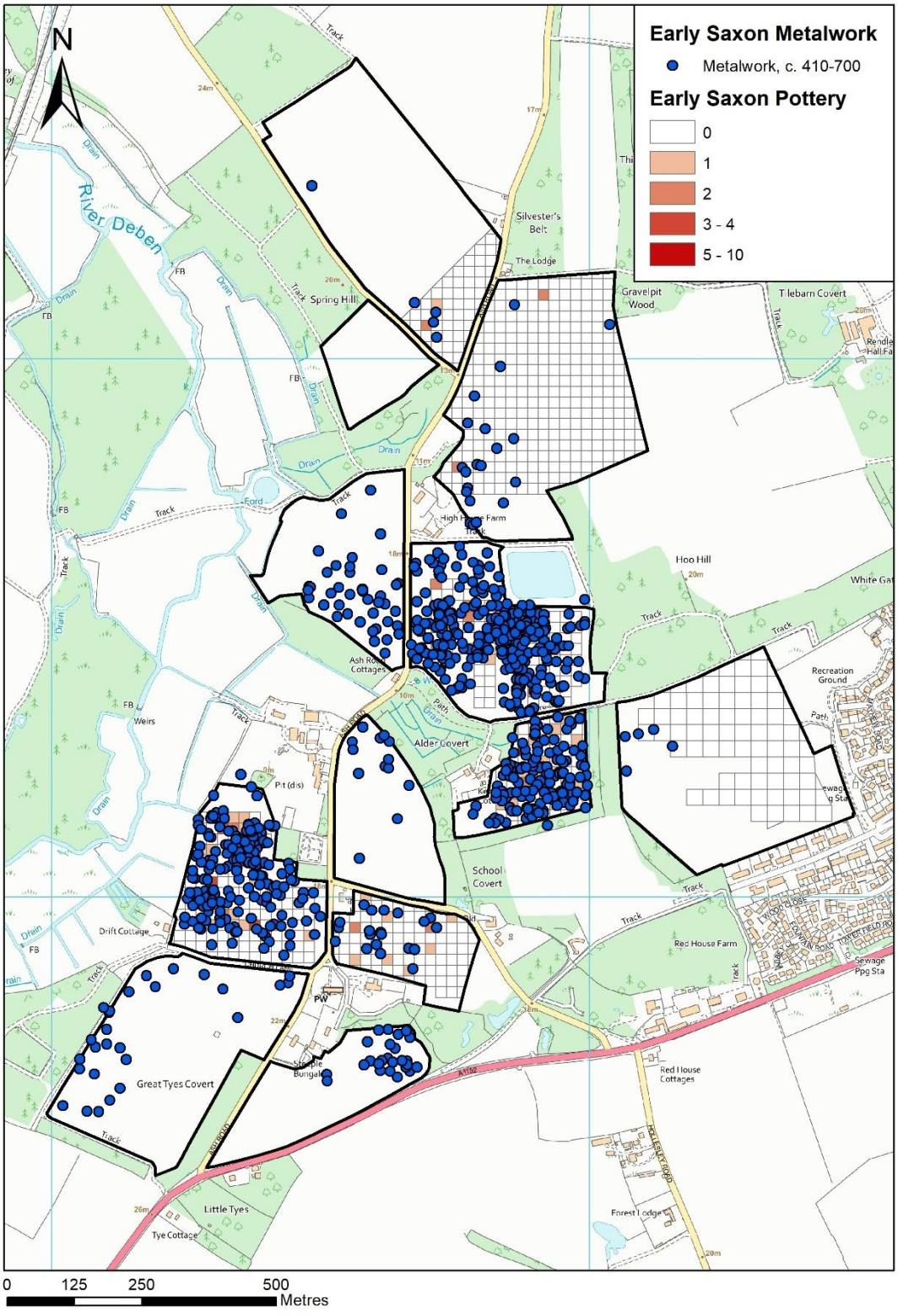

Figure 2.15: The distribution of Early Saxon metalwork in the study area and its association with the scatters of pottery recovered during the fieldwalking survey.

Figure 2.16: L&L Image Database RLM044 1457 - copper alloy fire damaged wrist clasp (left) and RLM044 1089 - copper alloy cruciform brooch fragment. These objects are typical of those recovered from funerary sites. Images not to scale.

Figure 2.17: L&L Image Database RLM044 1776, a copper alloy buckle (left) and RLM044 1660, a silver early penny (right). These artefacts are more typical of settlement areas. Images not to scale.

more representative of the living, congruent with that recovered from other settlement sites, such as West Stow (Figure 2.17).[137] This scatter overlies the excavated settlement areas, suggesting that the spread of material may be associated with occupation.

Although the differences in domestic and funerary assemblages have long been debated,[138] the evidence laid out above suggests that *both* the density of these assemblages and their composition offer the opportunity to differentiate settlements from cemeteries. It is apparent

[137] L&L Finds Catalogue RLM043 1009, RLM044 1094 and RLM044 1254. Rings, brooches, and wrist clasps were recovered from the West Stow settlement, although in lower numbers than in the nearby cemetery. See West, *West Stow, Vol 1*, 122–24.
[138] Chester-Kadwell, *Early Anglo-Saxon Communities*, 80–82.

that the densest post-Roman metalwork assemblages derive from funerary sites, while significant, but less dense assemblages are often associated with occupation.[139] Such a pattern is perhaps unsurprising; with large numbers of funerary assemblages containing a curated selection of metalwork deposited in a restricted area, it is likely that a greater density of metalwork should be recovered from zones of funerary activity. Yet, this observation suggests that metalwork offers opportunities to differentiate settlements from cemeteries in a way less possible using pottery alone. While pottery assemblages denote those areas of intense activity in the landscape, metalwork scatters offer opportunities to differentiate landscapes of the living from those of the dead. Dense scatters of metalwork reflect funerary sites, the scale of which is associated with the number of burials, while settlements are represented by more diffuse spreads of metalwork, often coterminous with pottery scatters.

It has been demonstrated by excavation that Park Field was the site of a late sixth-to eighth-century high status settlement. Yet, this elite activity is poorly represented in the fieldwalking data, marked by only a limited pottery scatter more typical of a sprawling rural settlement. Again, although reflecting peaks of activity in the countryside, Early Saxon pottery scatters offer little insight into the varied activities that took place in the past. The spread of metalwork recovered from the site, meanwhile, offers greater opportunities to discern patterns of social differentiation; such notions have been widely accepted in the interpretation of funerary deposits but rarely been extended to ploughzone scatters.[140]

The Rendlesham assemblage suggests that, again, *both* the composition of the assemblage, as well as its scale, reflects contemporary patterns of social differentiation. As noted above, the settlement identified on Dog Kennel Field and Sandwalk appears of comparatively low status compared to the site lying to the south, marked by a spread of utilitarian artefact types, such as copper alloy brooches, pins and buckles, although some degree of social differentiation is expressed through gilded and silvered objects (Figure 2.18).[141] The site to the south is, however, demarcated by 'elite indicators' such as precious metal jewellery and strap fittings, as well as objects related to warfare and equestrianism that are again associated with a martial elite.[142]

[139] Metal detected assemblages are, however. heavily biased in favour of female graves. Male graves often include artefacts such as iron weapons which both degrade rapidly in the plough soil and are discriminated against by metal detectors.
[140] David Hinton, *Gold and Gilt, Pots and Pins: Possessions and People in Medieval Britain* (Oxford University Press, 2005), 39–74. Exceptions include Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*.
[141] See, for example, L&L Finds Catalogue RLM036 1047 and RLM044 1776.
[142] See, for example, L&L Finds Catalogue RLM013 0603 and RLM013 1360. These objects are congruent with those recovered from the high-status burials at Sutton Hoo. For the link between equestrianism and elite identities, see Chris Fern, 'The Archaeological Evidence for Equestrianism

Indeed, a greater number of coins were also recovered from the high-status settlement area, suggesting that, for the Early Saxon period at least, coinage, largely comprised of gold tremisses and thyrsmas, is associated with higher status settlement (Figures 2.19 and 2.20).[143] In essence, although the quantity of material is impacted by the status of activity on the site, the composition of the assemblage reveals the wealth and status of settlement and activity in the landscape to a greater extent than considering the quantity of material alone.

It is clear, again, that only through taking a blended approach to ploughzone archaeology can the most accurate perception of the landscape be achieved. While pottery scatters demarcate areas of intense activity, metalwork scatters offer greater opportunity to understand the nuances of the landscape, enabling occupation sites to be differentiated from cemeteries, as well as offering insight into the relative wealth of individual settlements.

Early Saxon Ploughzone Assemblages and the Rural Landscape

While pottery scatters have widely contributed to understanding of Early Saxon settlement, fieldwalking datasets have been much less widely employed to understand post-Roman agriculture; such patterns derive both from the diffuse nature of Early Saxon manuring scatters, as well as uncertainties in differentiating manuring scatters from the residue of plough-damaged cremations.[144]

The diffuse scatter of pottery recovered from Kitchen Piece illustrates such issues. Superficially, this assemblage appears to represent a small settlement or cemetery, with the material recovered the residue of waste disposal or urned cremations akin to that identified on Dog Kennel Field and Sandwalk. Had only ceramic evidence been considered, such an interpretation would have appeared plausible. The incorporation of metalwork scatters into the study of the past offers the opportunity to refine this interpretation, however. While the pottery scatter may

in Early Anglo-Saxon England, C.450-700', in *Just Skin and Bones? New Perspectives on Human-Animal Relations in the Historic Past* (Tempus Reparatum, 2005).

[143] See, for example, L&L Finds Catalogue RLM013 0188, RLM013 0211 and RLM013 0355.

[144] Tom Williamson, 'The Development of Settlement in North-West Essex: The Results of a Recent Field Survey', *Essex Archaeology and History* 17 (1986): 126–27.

Figure 2.18: Images from L&L Image Database of objects more typical of low status settlements, although some degree of social differentation is implied by gilded and silvered objects. Images not to scale.

1 RLM038 1183 – copper alloy Early Saxon gilded buckle.

2 RLM038 1317 – copper alloy Early Saxon cruciform brooch fragment

3 EKE0211198 – copper alloy Early Saxon gilded mount.

4 RLM036 1370 – copper alloy Early Saxon crucifom brooch.

5 RLM036 1260 – copper alloy Early Saxon wrist clasp.

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Figure 2.19: Images from L&L Image Database of objects reflecting high status occupation, including precious metal jewellery, weapons fittings and objects associated with equestrianism, although it should be noted that these objects are somewhat atypical. Images not to scale.

1. RLM013 0789 – copper alloy Early Saxon shield stud.

2. RLM013 0826 – silver Early Saxon sword scabbard mount.

3. RLM013 0372 – gold Early Saxon pin.

4. RLM013 0647 – copper alloy Early Saxon gilded harness mount.

5. RLM036 1260 – Gold Merovingian Tremissis.

6. RLM013 0394 – Early Saxon gold bead.

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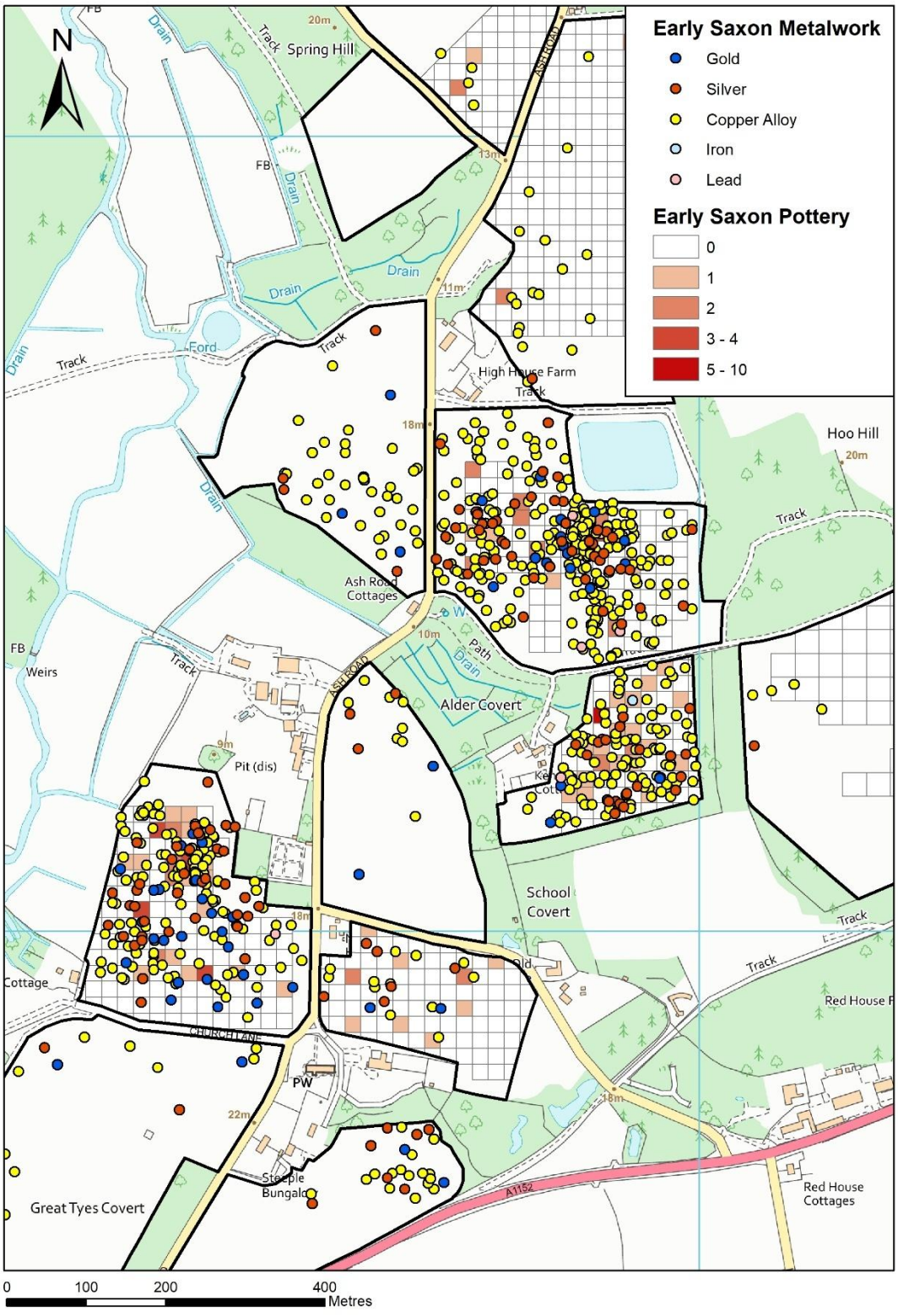

Figure 2.20: the distribution of Early Saxon metalwork in the study area, categorised by composition.

reflect a cremation cemetery, the metalwork assemblage includes only a limited spread of metalwork associated with cemetery sites, such as brooches, none of which have been burned, discounting the possibility of funerary activity. Such evidence again suggests that only through the incorporation of both pottery and metalwork into a single study can the most accurate interpretation of historic activity be gained.

The most plausible interpretation of the pottery recovered from Kitchen Piece is, therefore, manuring, with small quantities of pottery incorporated in refuse from the fifth-and-sixth-century farms to the north of the site and spread over cultivated land. The distribution of pottery on Kitchen Piece corroborates this interpretation. Although the entirety of the field is characterised by soils of the Burlingham Association, there are variations in this soil related to topography; those soils to the north and west of the site proved attractive to early farmers as they lay on the slopes of the valley, aiding with drainage. Those to the east, however, lay on level ground and are, therefore, more prone to waterlogging, diminishing their value for Early Saxon farmers. That the scatters of handmade ceramics occur only on those amenable soils that could be cultivated with the technology available to early farmers implies that this material is indeed associated with arable farming, derived from the manuring of arable fields. The thin scatter of pottery from Collets may be similarly interpreted. Such evidence clearly suggests that, in the absence of metalwork scatters suggestive of funerary activity, thin spreads of pottery demarcate areas of Early Saxon arable farming.

It has, up to this point, remained unclear whether thin spreads of Early Saxon metalwork may similarly be interpreted as the residue of manuring. Within the Rendlesham case study area, the distribution of thin metalwork scatters is congruent with the ceramic manuring scatters discussed above; such evidence clearly implies that thin spreads of Early Saxon metalwork may indeed derive from the manuring of the arable landscape. The metalwork scatter from Kitchen Piece corroborates such notions. The distribution of this assemblage, largely comprised of coins, brooches and buckles, is evidently similar to that of the ceramics, implying some degree of congruence in the ways in which these objects entered the soil (Figure 2.21). That metalwork has been recovered from the middens from which this manure was drawn, both onsite and elsewhere, further corroborates the association between diffuse metalwork scatters and Early Saxon arable farming.[145] Objects such as furniture mounts and coinage that are unlikely to have been routinely carried in the arable landscape, as well as a proportion of the dress accessories

[145] Christopher Loveluck, *Rural Settlement, Lifestyles and Social Change in the Later First Millennium AD at Flixborough, Lincolnshire* (Oxbow Books, 2007), 13.

such as brooches and pins, likely entered fields with midden waste, spread to restore fertility to arable fields.

The wider distribution of metalwork supports such an interpretation. The thin scatters of metalwork in Kitchen Piece, Black Croft, Collets and Foxburgh South occur only on those areas of more amenable soils that could be worked with the technology available to early farmers. If these objects entered the plough soil through other processes, then it may be expected that this material would have been spread widely into varying environments. That the distribution of the metalwork is, instead, largely confined to these agriculturally valuable soils implies an association between this metalwork and arable farming. Areas of heavier soil that were not suited to early agriculture, such as Hut Field, show no similar metalwork assemblage, adding further weight to the agrarian origins of a sizeable proportion of the metalwork assemblage (Figure 2.22).

There are, however, variations in the metal detecting dataset that may, as in the later Roman period, enable the identification of the arable landscapes farmed from individual settlements. The manuring assemblage from Kitchen Piece, Black Croft and Steeple Tye contain the residue of elite activity, including finds such as precious metal coinage and jewellery. Manuring assemblages from areas of cultivation to the north, such as Collets and Foxburgh South, on the other hand, are comprised of more utilitarian material, such as copper alloy wrist clasps and brooches. As in the later Roman period, such variations are arguably related to the wealth and status of the settlements from which the fields were farmed, or from which the manure was drawn at least. It can be suggested that Park Field, Kitchen Piece and Black Croft, were farmed from the royal vill, or using manure derived from this site at least, while Collets and Foxburgh South may have been farmed from the lower status farmsteads identified in Sandwalk and Dog Kennel Field. While pottery scatters reflect fields and settlements at all levels of the social scale, metalwork scatters allow the interpretation of patterns of wealth in the landscape, as well as the association of particular zones of cultivation with individual settlements.

While a significant component of these thin spreads of metalwork derives from manuring, many complex processes have contributed to the formation of ploughzone assemblages. Some of these objects may have been dropped during agricultural activity, including both livestock husbandry and arable cultivation. While personal possessions such as pins and brooches may have entered the plough soil with manure, as evidenced by the recovery of such objects from

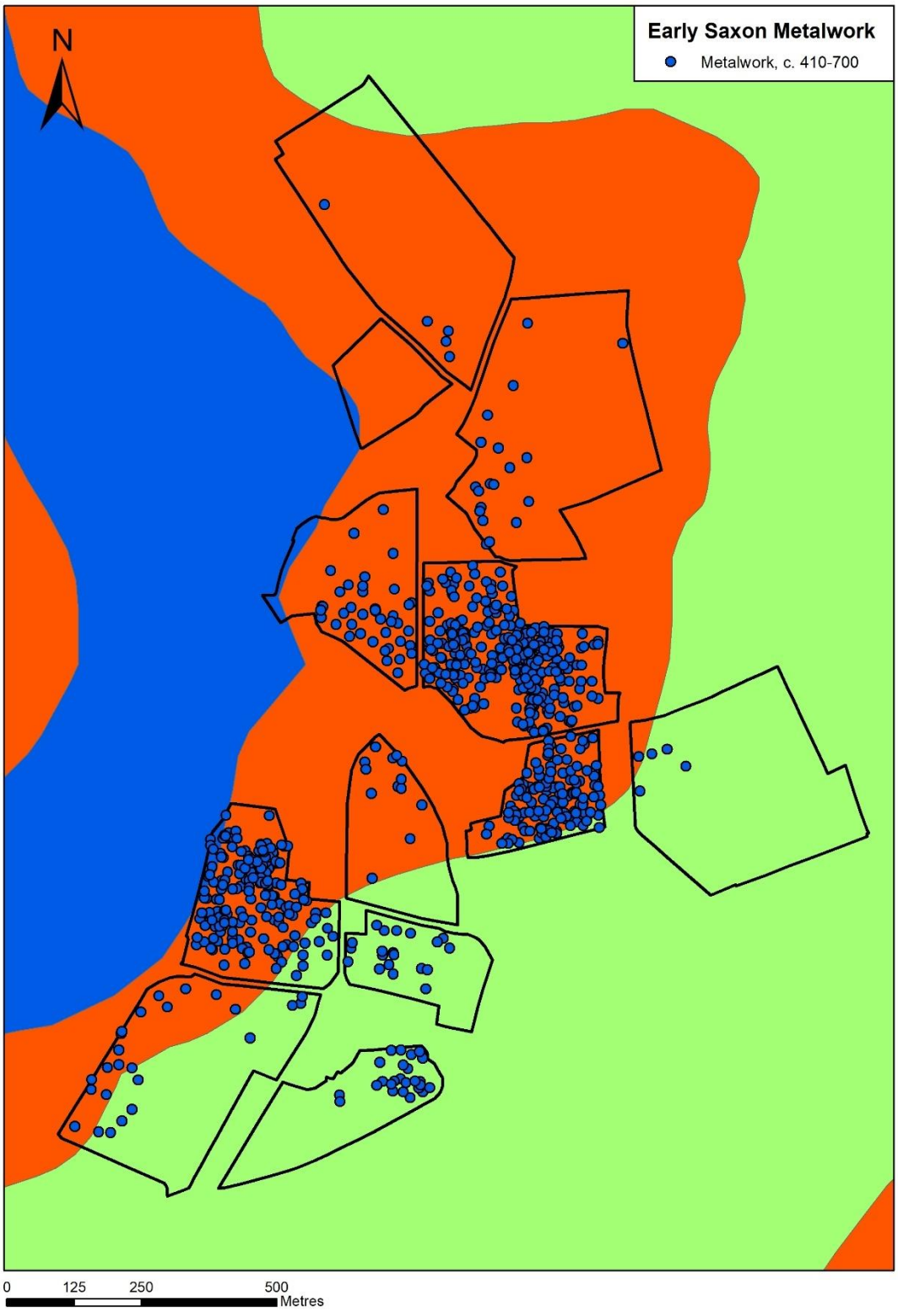

Figure 2.21: The distribution of Early Saxon metalwork and their association with the dominant soils of the study area.

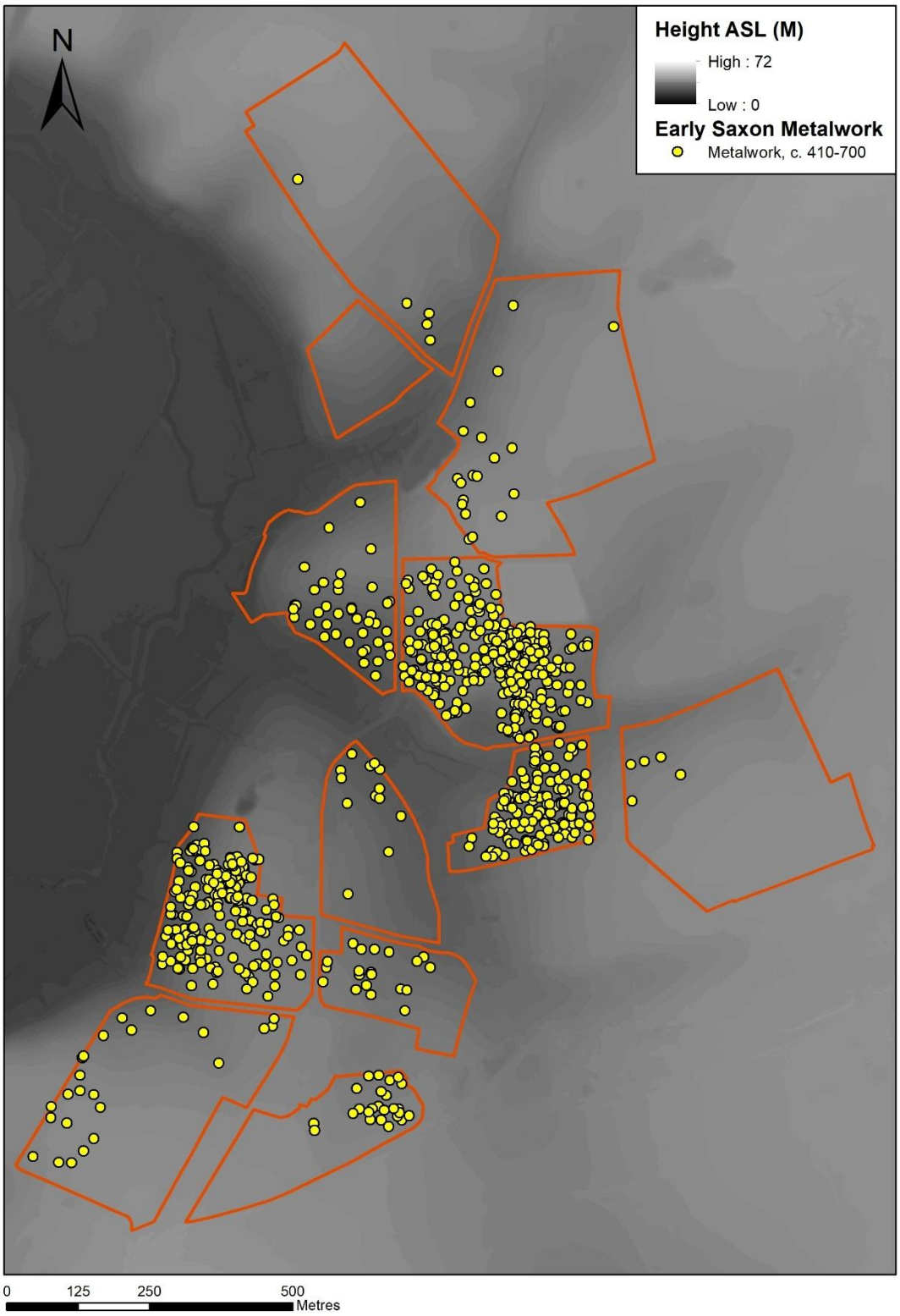

Figure 2.22: The distribution of Early Saxon metalwork in the study area and their association with topography.

Figure 2.23: Images from L&L Image Database of personal possessions that are associated with both arable and livestock farming. The integration of fieldwalking datasets into studies of the past enables these scatters reflecting arable farming from those reflecting casual losses made while managing herds of livestock. Left – RLM038 1235 – copper alloy Early Saxon strap loop. Right – EKE019 1042 – copper alloy Early Saxon buckle. Images not to scale.

excavated middens, some of these artefacts, particularly those likely to be worn during daily work, may represent casual losses made while working within the landscape. These activities may account for some of those personal possessions recovered from the suggested arable areas of Black Croft and Kitchen Piece.[146] Similarly, the small number of brooches and wrist clasps that extend onto areas of less agriculturally viable soils, such as those to the north of the study area, may derive from the management of livestock, dropped in paddocks and grazing grounds (Figure 2.23).

As highlighted above, assemblages representing casual losses made during arable farming and livestock husbandry are congruent; differentiating between these various agricultural activities using metalwork assemblages is clearly problematic. Taking a 'blended' approach to ploughzone archaeology can, however, offer greater clarity regarding the taphonomic pathways taken by metalwork assemblages. Thin, widely distributed spreads of personal possessions, coterminous with scatters of pottery, can be interpreted as evidence of cultivation; where no pottery has been recovered, however, it is likely that such spreads of metalwork, instead, derive from the management of livestock. Scatters representing livestock husbandry may also be less dense than manuring scatters. Household waste does not enter paddocks and grazing grounds to restore fertility, while smaller labour inputs are required for the management of herds of livestock, suggesting that such activities may result in less material entering the plough soil than arable

[146] See, for example, L&L Finds Catalogue RLM044 1008 and RLM046 1049.

farming. That the heavier soils to the north, as well as infertile sands to the south and west are marked by only a limited scatter of material corroborates such notions.

Pottery, Metalwork and Middle Saxon Settlement

The Middle Saxon assemblage from Rendlesham is smaller than its Early Saxon counterpart owing, in part, to the decline of furnished burial. While this dataset presents opportunities to interrogate the association between ploughzone scatters and Middle Saxon activity, there are issues in its interpretation. During the early decades of the eighth century, activity in Rendlesham remained atypical and, therefore, the relevance of conclusions drawn from this dataset to other, more typical sites may be questioned. Many 'Middle Saxon' artefacts also span the transition of the site from an elite centre to a more typical rural settlement, presenting further issues in interpreting patterns of activity. Despite this, the range of survey techniques employed enable tentative conclusions to be drawn.

Two dense scatters of Ipswich ware have been recovered from the study area, each of which may plausibly be interpreted as evidence of settlement (Figure 2.24). The first of these is in the north of Park Field, represented by a sherd scatter extending towards the margins of the field, suggesting the presence of nearby occupation, perhaps lying beneath the non-arable land use surrounding Naunton Hall. Indeed, a number of Middle Saxon features were identified during excavations prior to the construction of a barn in the vicinity, corroborating the existence of contemporary activity in the area.[147] The second of these sites is in the southwest corner of Kitchen Piece, denoted by a significant, spatially discrete concentration of pottery. Although each of these dense scatters may represent middens adjacent to occupation sites, rather than the settlement itself, the association between middens and settlements suggest that these dense scatters of Ipswich ware may be interpreted as evidence of occupation.

The Middle Saxon metalwork assemblage is more limited, both in scale and composition, than that from previous centuries (Figure 2.25). The assemblage is dominated by early pennies and pins, among other artefacts.[148] At a most basic level, much as in the later Roman period, there is a disconnect between the metalwork and pottery scatters, with the metalwork suggestive of a scale of activity not reflected in the ceramic assemblage. Such patterning arguably derives from the decline of elite activity on the site in the eighth century, with much of the metalwork assemblage the result of activities associated with the latest phase of elite occupation, largely

[147] Edward Martin et al., 'Archaeology in Suffolk in 1982', *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History* 35 (1983): 235.
[148] See, for example, L&L Finds Catalogue RLM013 0216 and RLM013 0725.

predating the widespread adoption of Ipswich ware, while the pottery assemblage reflects settlement and agriculture that occurred beyond the end of overtly high-status occupation in Rendlesham.[149] When objects pre-dating this transitional phase are removed, the distribution of pottery and metalwork is much more congruent (Figure 2.26).

Although more muted than in previous centuries, variations in the distribution of this assemblage are apparent. While the dense spread of pottery on Park Field is associated with a significant metalwork scatter, the Kitchen Piece site is marked by a much thinner spread of artefacts.[150] Such a pattern may plausibly be associated with the relative wealth of each of these sites, with the Park Field site wealthier than that lying to the east. With greater economic wealth and status in contemporary society, the occupiers of such sites were able to purchase greater quantities of material culture, including metalwork, from burgeoning trade networks that would have not been available to poorer members of society.[151] It appears, therefore, that, much as in the later Roman centuries, the scale of the metalwork assemblage derived from individual settlements is directly associated with the wealth and status of the occupation site.[152]

The composition of these assemblages further enables the identification of social gradation in the Middle Saxon landscape. Although both assemblages include early pennies, as well as personal possessions such as brooches, hooked tags and strap fittings, 86% of the Park Field assemblage is comprised of silver coinage compared to just 40% of the Kitchen Piece metalwork (Figures 2.27 and 2.28). Such a pattern suggests that both the quantity and the composition of the assemblage, as in the Early Saxon period, denotes the status of activity on any given site. Precious metal objects, particularly Middle Saxon coinage, are associated with high status activity, while more utilitarian personal possessions occur in a range of contexts. Such patterns are reflective of wider East Anglian trends; although, as will be discussed in Chapter Four, the nature and function of 'productive sites' has been debated, it is largely accepted that such sites were of higher status than more typical rural farmsteads.[153] That these sites are marked by

[149] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 152.
[150] 67 artefacts have been recovered from the Park Field site, while the Kitchen Field site is marked by only 10.
[151] Similar ideas are manifested in Christopher Scull, 'Social Transactions, Gift Exchange, and Power in the Archaeology of the Fifth to Seventh Centuries', in *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, ed. David A. Hinton et al. (Oxford University Press, 2011).
[152] Hinton, *Gold and Gilt, Pots and Pins*, 75–107.
[153] High status excavated Middle Saxon sites such as Brandon display similar patterns. See Andrew Tester et al., *Staunch Meadow, Brandon, Suffolk: A High Status Middle Saxon Settlement on the Fen Edge* (East Anglian Archaeology, 2014), 166–270.

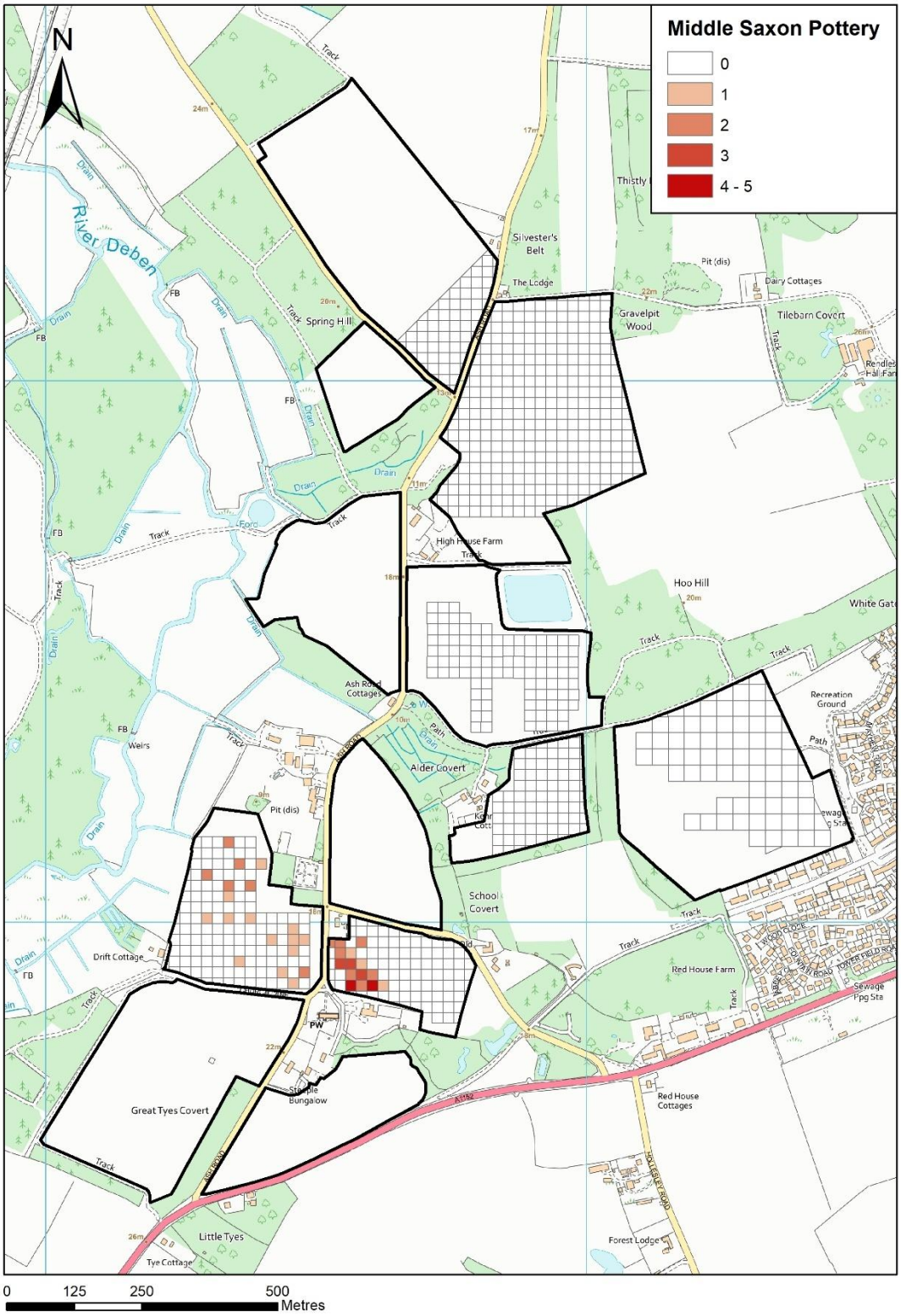

Figure 2.24: The distribution of Middle Saxon pottery in the Rendlesham study area.

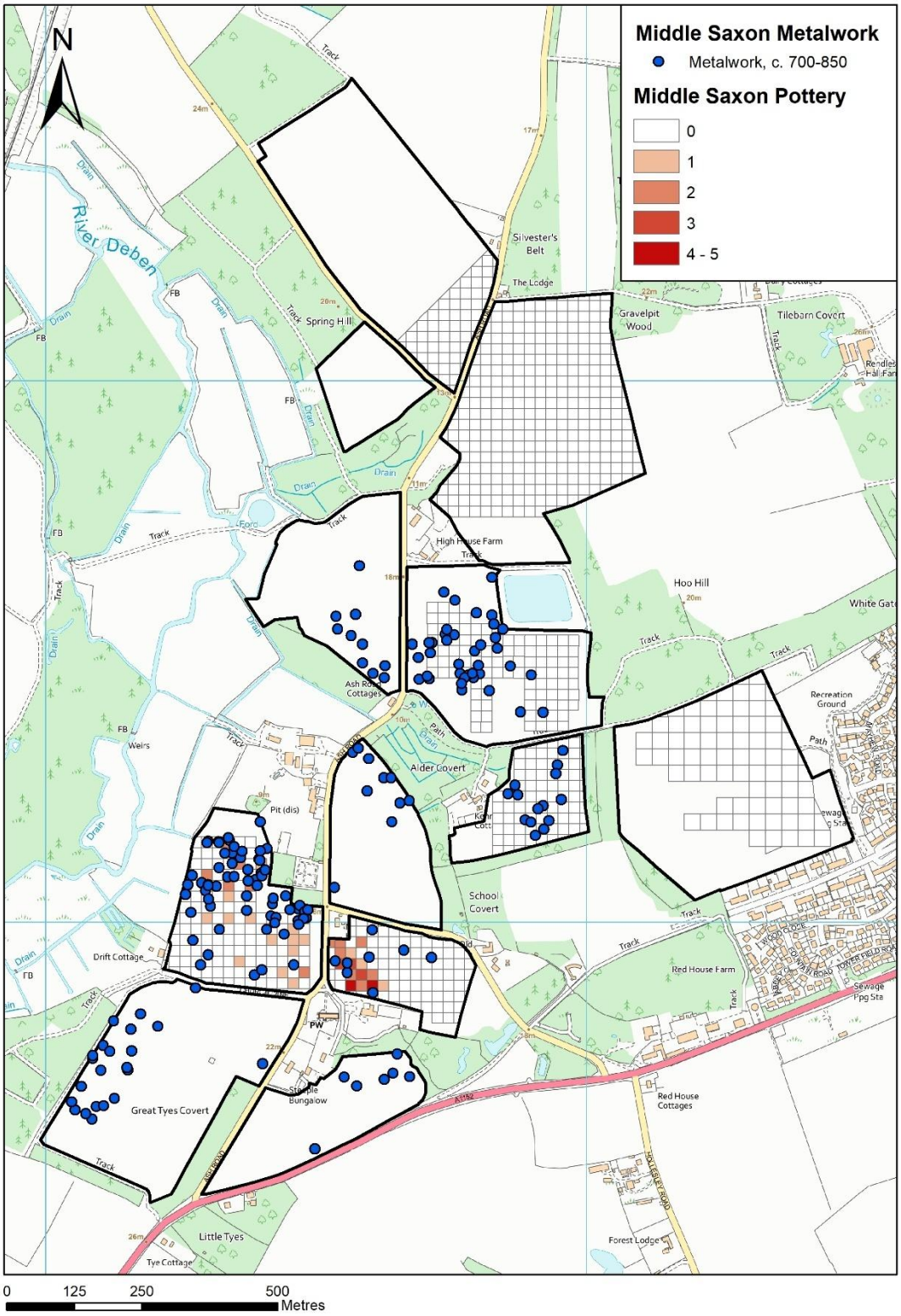

Figure 2.25: The distribution of Middle Saxon metalwork (blue dots) in the study area and its association with the pottery scatters recovered by fieldwalking.

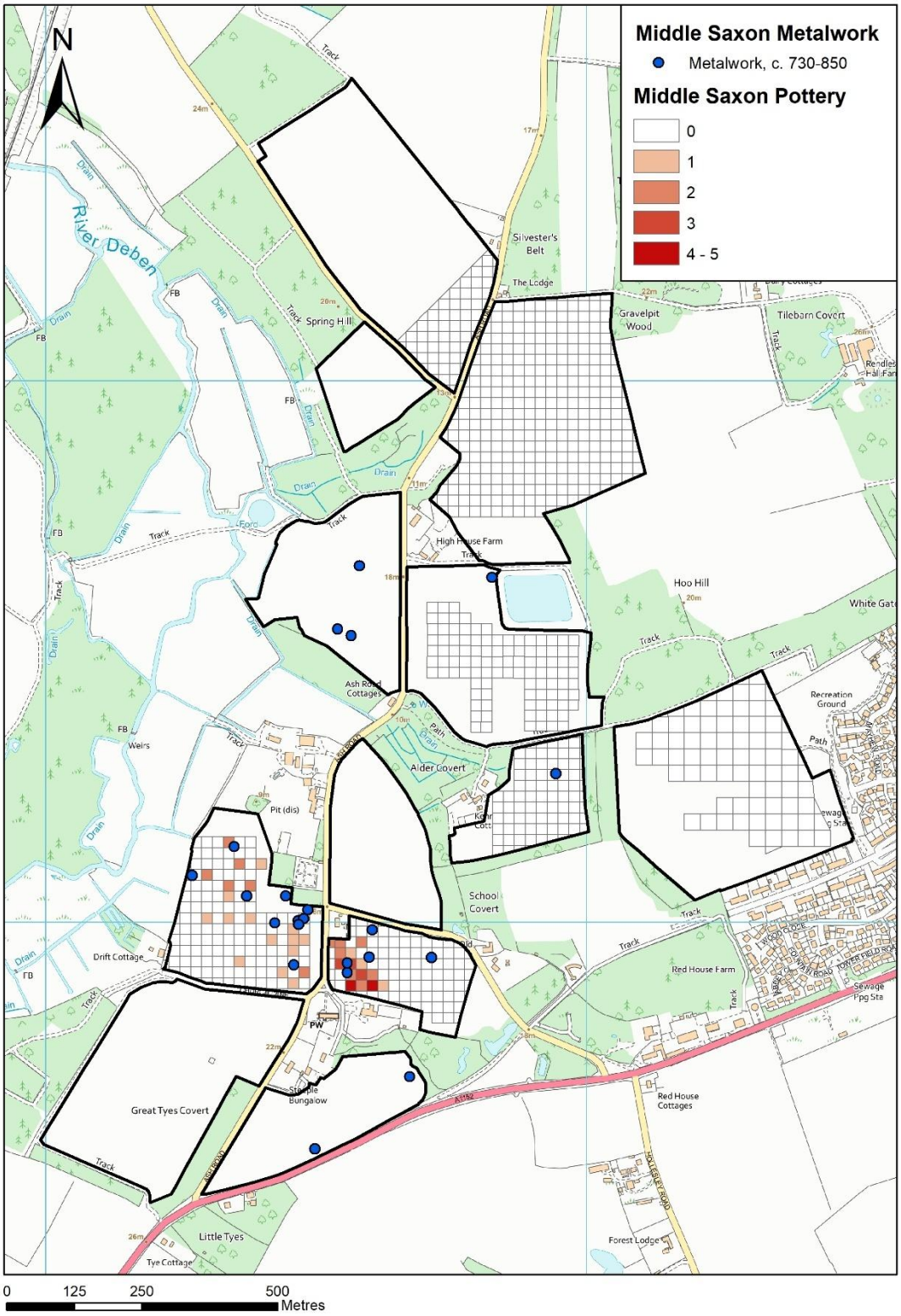

Figure 2.26: the distribution of metalwork in the Rendlesham study area that certainly post-dates the decline of elite activity at the site in the second quarter of the eighth century. The distribution of is congruent with that of the pottery.

Figure 2.27: Images from L&L Image Database of objects associated with high status occupation, including coinage and personal possessions. It is important to note, however, that these elite assemblages often also contain elements more typical of low status occupation. Images not to scale.

1 RLM013 0038 – silver Middle Saxon early penny.

2 RLM013 0082 – copper alloy Middle Saxon strap end inlaid with silver wire.

3 RLM013 0491 – silver Middle Saxon early penny.

4 RLM013 0182 – silver Middle Saxon penny of Eadwald.

5 RLM013 1035 – silver Middle Saxon pin.

Figure 2.28: Images from L&L Image Database of objects associated with lower status occupation. Images not to scale.

1 RLM043 1047 – copper alloy Middle Saxon ansate brooch.

2 RLM014 1012 – copper alloy Middle Saxon ansate brooch.

spreads of coinage corroborates the association between silver coinage and high-status Middle Saxon activity.

It is once again worthwhile to interrogate the deposits from which this metalwork was drawn. Although much of this material may have been dropped on the ground surface surrounding settlement sites, a significant quantity may also have been incorporated in midden deposits, either intentionally discarded as waste or accidentally lost in the settlement site and swept up with household waste. Metalwork such as the pair of pins from Kitchen Piece, recovered in the same area as the intense pottery scatter, likely reflects such a taphonomic pathway. Indeed, pins have previously been recovered from middens on the site, suggesting that such objects were occasionally incorporated into midden assemblages.[154] Such notions have important implications for understanding patterns of agricultural activity using ploughzone deposits, as will be discussed below.

The paucity of metalwork from Dog Kennel Field and Sandwalk also proves significant. The late seventh century witnessed a reduction and eventual cessation of furnished burials.[155] That the

[154] Similar patterns were noted at Flixborough in Loveluck, *Flixborough*, 13.
[155] Bayliss et al., *Anglo-Saxon Graves and Grave Goods*.

quantity of metalwork recovered from the funerary zone on Sandwalk rapidly declined in the late seventh century suggests that much of the Early Saxon assemblage, both pottery and metalwork, is representative of funerary activity. Those Middle Saxon artefacts that have been recovered from the site likely represent casual losses made while managing herds of livestock.

Ploughzone Scatters and the Middle Saxon Agricultural Landscape

The Middle Saxon pottery assemblage from Rendlesham implies a sizeable retrenchment of cultivation, or at least manuring using household refuse, particularly on Kitchen Piece. The lack of Middle Saxon pottery in the east of Kitchen Piece suggests that the site was not manured with household waste and was likely left uncultivated, although the possibility that the field was directly manured by livestock cannot be excluded. A diffuse scatter of pottery has, however, been recovered from the south of Park Field, suggesting that the area may have been under the plough, perhaps forming the agricultural territory of both the Park and Kitchen Piece settlements.

This thin scatter of pottery is coterminous with a loose spread of metalwork, largely comprised of hooked tags, strap fittings and coinage. That this assemblage is spatially congruent with the Ipswich ware scatter plausibly suggests that diffuse scatters of metalwork can similarly be interpreted as the residue of the manuring of arable land with household waste. Significantly, this assemblage is congruent in composition with that recovered from the settlement and midden areas of Park Field. With midden material spread across arable fields in order to restore fertility, it is perhaps unsurprising that the settlement and manuring assemblages are similar in terms of composition. This association, does, however, imply a direct relationship between the composition of manuring scatters and the midden assemblages from which they were derived.

The distribution of metalwork in the study area more widely adds further weight to the interpretation of thin scatters of metalwork as the residue of manuring (Figures 2.29 and 2.30). As with much of the Early Saxon assemblage, the vast majority of Middle Saxon material that forms part of thin scatters is confined to the most fertile and tractable soils in the study area; such notions are particularly pertinent for those artefacts which post-date the decline of elite activity on the site. If these scatters were representative of a wide suite of activities, then it may be expected that they would extend into a range of environmental contexts; that these scatters

are, instead, confined to agriculturally viable soils implies an association between these clusters of material and cultivation. [156]

As noted above, however, the metalwork assemblage presents a more nuanced perception of Middle Saxon activity than the fieldwalking dataset alone. Although the ceramic manuring scatter extends on to Park Field, there is a noticeable lacuna in the distribution of metalwork in this area. Similarly, although the metalwork spreads into Steeple Tye, there are clear gaps here too. It has been suggested above that there are apparent variations in the relative wealth of the Park Field and Kitchen Piece settlements manifested in the ploughzone assemblage recovered from each site; this difference in wealth may also have impacted the distribution of metalwork representative of cultivation. Those settlements of the lower classes were materially poor, particularly in terms of portable wealth and material culture, while elite settlements, with more metalwork in circulation, appear to be marked by greater and more diverse ploughzone metalwork assemblages. With more metalwork in elite settlements, it is inevitable that a greater proportion of this material was lost, becoming incorporated into middens. As a larger quantity of metalwork was contained within these midden deposits, more of this material entered arable fields compared to those manured by the lower classes. Those areas of cultivation marked by scatters of metalwork can, therefore, be interpreted as those areas manured using waste from elite sites. Areas such as the southwest of Park Field and the northeast of Black Croft may have been manured with waste from the proto-manorial site associated with Naunton Hall, while the areas of Park Field marked by a ceramic scatter, but no metalwork may have been farmed from the lower-class site on Kitchen Piece. In essence, while pottery demarcates those areas farmed from settlements of all statuses, metalwork assemblages enable the identification of those areas manured using the waste from elite sites.

Figure 2.29: Image from L&L Image Database RLM043 1126-silver early penny from the Black Croft arable area. Image not to scale.

[156] This material also conforms to the distance decay model of manuring, furthering the association between this metalwork and arable cultivation.

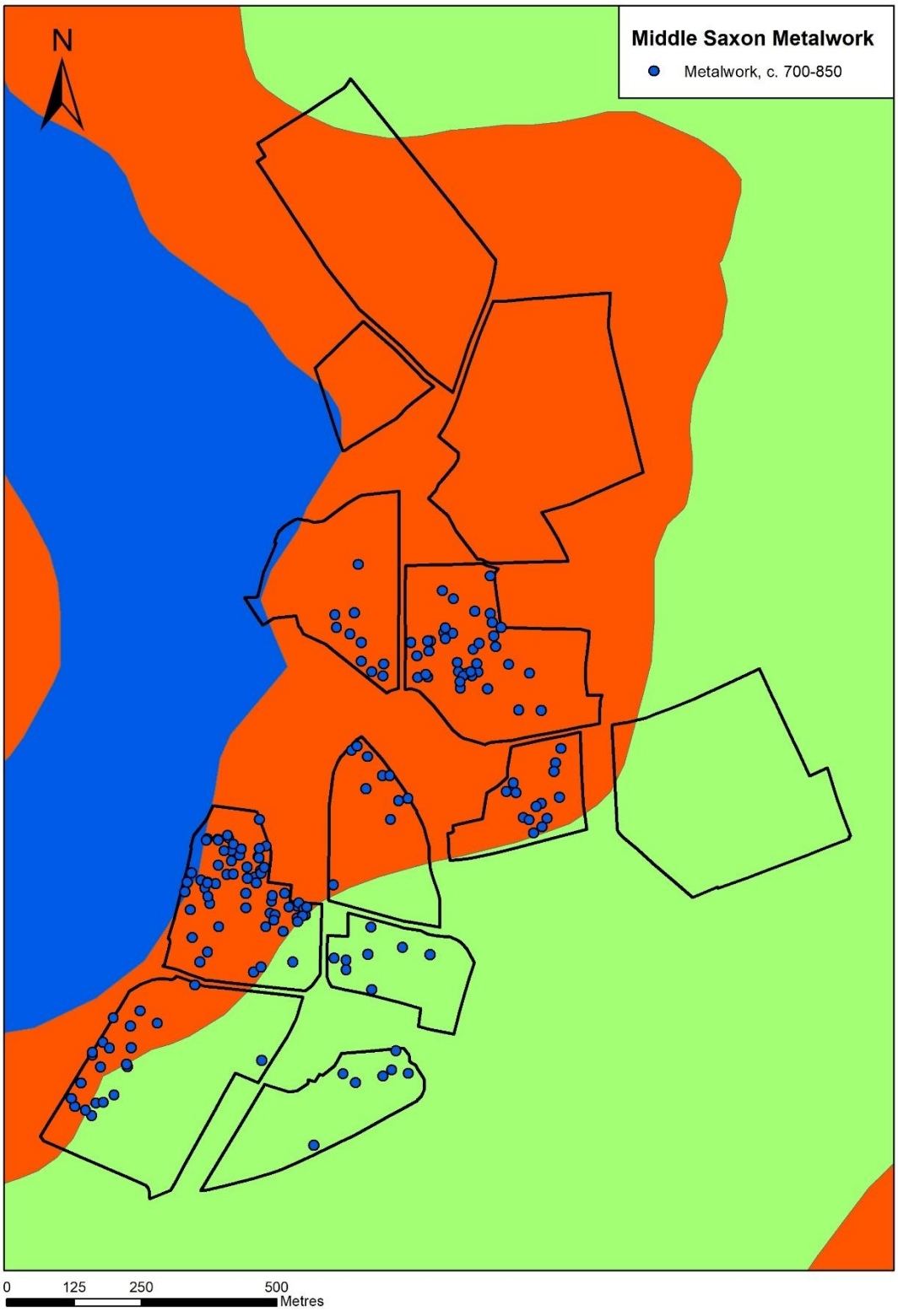

Figure 2.30: The distribution of Middle Saxon metalwork in the Rendlesham case study and its association with the dominant soils of the area.

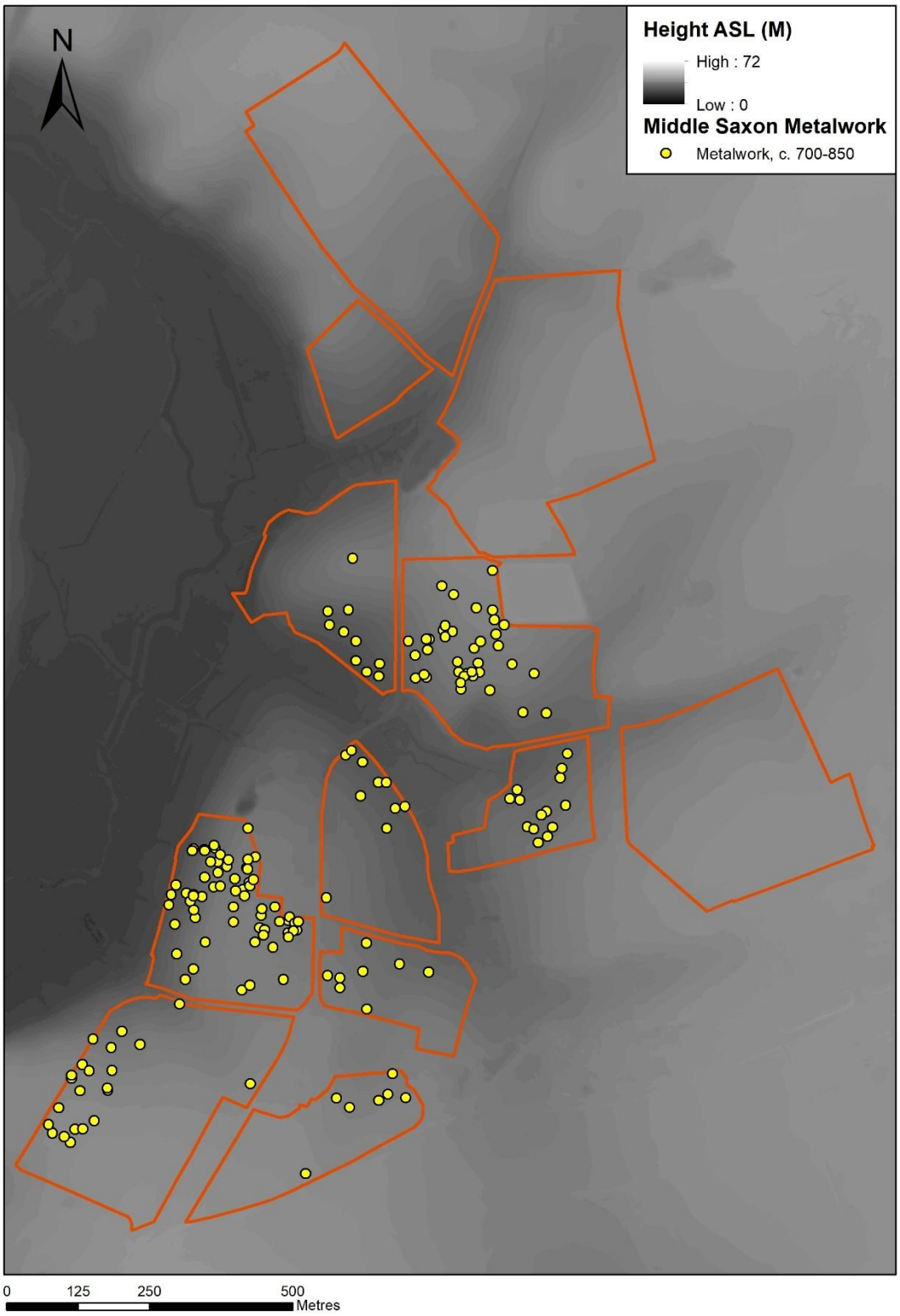

Figure 2.31: The distribution of Middle Saxon metalwork and its association with the topography of the Rendlesham study area.

Figure: 2.32 Images from L&L Image Database of personal possessions associated with both arable and livestock farming. The integration of pottery scatters into studies of the past enables arable fields to be differentiated from grazing grounds. Left – RLM036 1129 – copper alloy Middle Saxon pin. Right – RLM044 1124 – copper alloy Middle Saxon brooch fragment. Images not to scale.

It cannot, however, be assumed that all thin scatters of metalwork are associated with arable farming; many complex processes contributed to the establishment of ploughzone assemblages. Some of the ploughzone metalwork may represent those objects lost during daily activities such as the management of livestock; such a taphonomic pathway is most likely for the small number of finds that extend onto less favourable areas, such as those from the west of Kitchen Piece (Figure 2.32). Such notions are particularly true for personal possessions likely carried during daily agricultural work such as brooches and bag catches.[157] As in earlier periods, differentiating scatters representing cultivation and livestock husbandry is problematic, particularly when it is considered that each of the assemblages likely derive from the same workers operating within the landscape. Livestock husbandry scatters may, however, be less dense than those scatters representing cultivation, owing to the lower labour inputs required for livestock farming. The incorporation of both pottery and metalwork scatters into a single study can also enable more accurate definition of areas of livestock husbandry in the past. Those spreads of metalwork not associated with pottery scatters likely relate to livestock farming, as in Collets, while scatters of *both* pottery and metalwork more plausibly reflect areas of arable cultivation.

Ploughzone Assemblages and Late Saxon Settlement

Four dense scatters of Late Saxon pottery are evident in the fieldwalking data, reflecting, in all probability, dispersed settlement sites (Figure 2.33). Two of these settlements, located in the

[157] See, for example, L&L Finds Catalogue RLM036 1129 and RLM044 1224.

north of Park Field and in the southeast of Kitchen Piece, may be described as major concentrations of material, the centres of which may lie beneath the non-arable land use surrounding Naunton Hall and the present rectory. Each of these sizeable concentrations likely relates to Domesday manorial sites or large holdings, one of which was associated with the present site of Naunton Hall, while a smaller holding was associated with the rectory and St Gregory's Church.[158] A further two concentrations of pottery are also apparent, each of these linked with Rendlesham Green, the Late Saxon origins of which have been attested through excavation.[159] One of these sites is located on the eastern margin of the Green in Kitchen Field, while the other, more diffuse scatter of pottery, is located on the western margin of the site in Park Field, likely reflecting peasant farmsteads adjacent to this area of common grazing. In essence, pottery scatters appear to highlight both manorial and peasant settlements in the Late Saxon period.

In each of these cases, the pottery scatter likely represents waste disposal in the area surrounding the settlement site, rather than direct evidence of occupation, owing to the widespread removal of pottery from dwellings to adjacent middens.[160] This waste disposal took place, however, in close proximity to the settlement itself; dense scatters of pottery can, therefore, be employed as valid proxies for occupation in the Late Saxon period.

The metalwork assemblage, largely comprised of hooked tags, brooches and coins, is more limited in scale than in earlier periods and offers only an ambiguous view of Late Saxon activity in Rendlesham (Figure 2.34).[161] Three relatively dense scatters are evident. The first of these is located in the north of Park Field in an area coterminous with the pottery scatter, suggesting that this metalwork may plausibly also have been generated by settlement activity. The second site is located on Three Corner Tye, with a diffuse scatter of material extending towards St Gregory's Church, suggesting that the centre of the metalwork scatter may be located beneath the permanent pasture surrounding the church and rectory. This site is likely associated with the scatter of Thetford ware that extends on to Kitchen Piece. A third site is centred on Dock Hill, perhaps a precursor to the manorial site associated with High House lying a short distance to the north. That these scatters are coterminous with sites attested through fieldwalking and

[158] A further Domesday manor was associated with High House. See Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 39–41.
[159] Caruth et al., *RLM 054 and 055*.
[160] Richard Jones and Della Hooke, 'Methodological Approaches to Medieval Rural Settlements and Landscapes', in *Medieval Rural Settlement: Britain and Ireland, AD 800-1600*, ed. Neil Christie and Paul Stamper (Windgather Press, 2012), 39.
[161] See, for example, L&L Finds Catalogue RLM044 1787 and RLM013 0987.

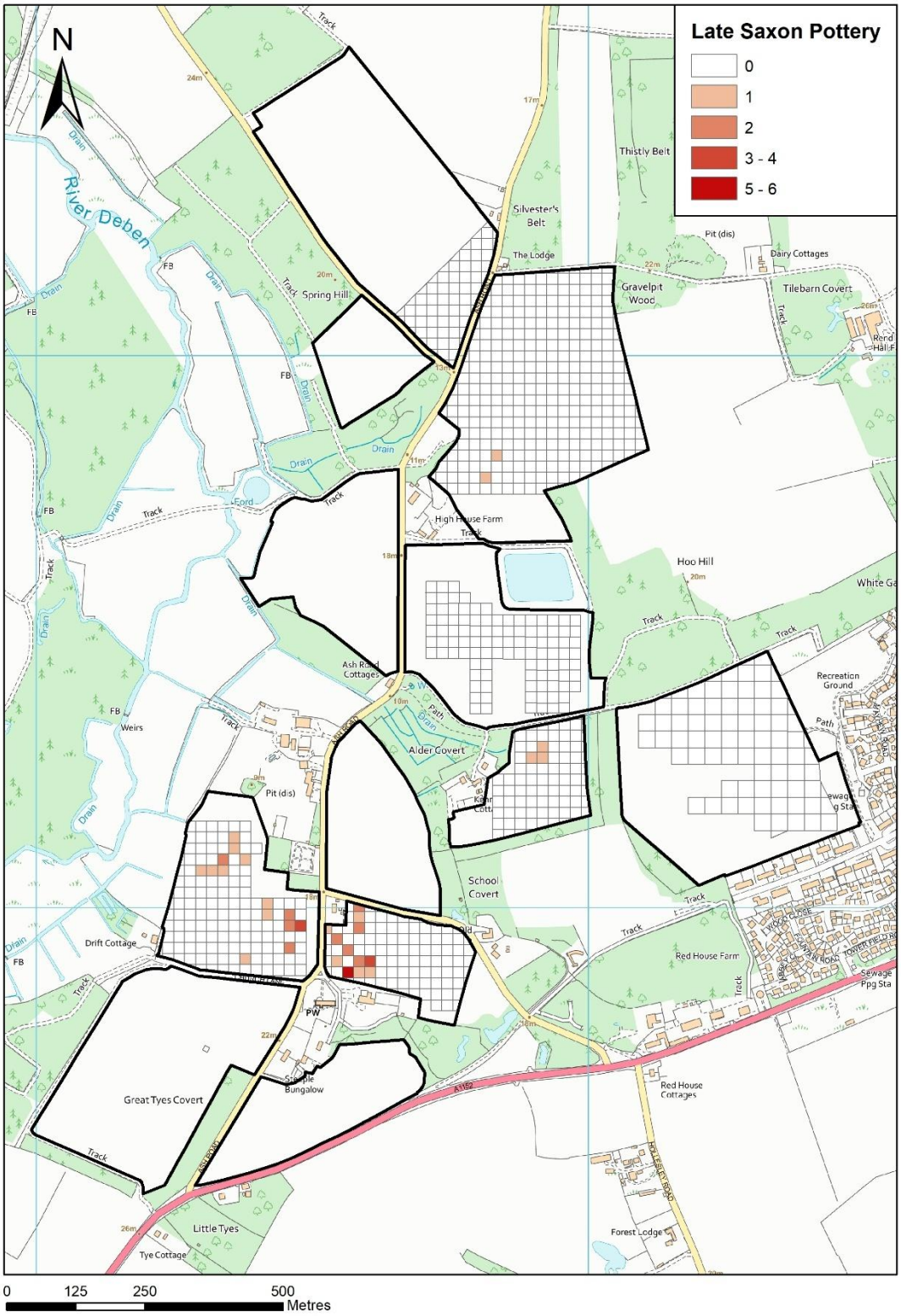

Figure 2.33: The distribution of Late Saxon pottery in the study area.

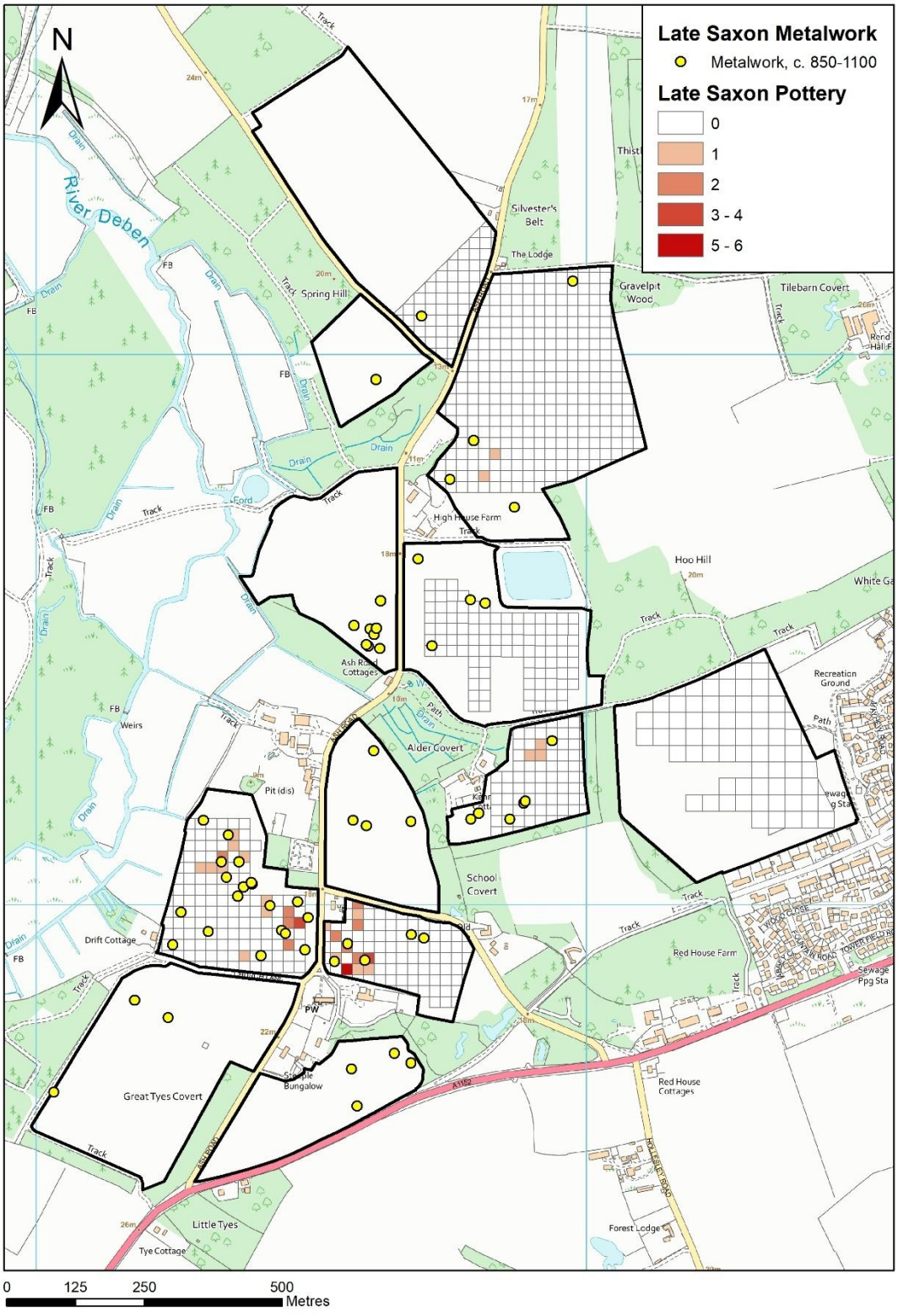

Figure 2.34: The distribution of Late Saxon metalwork in the Rendlesham study area and its association with the scatters of pottery recovered during the fieldwalking survey. While the long date range of many of these artefacts presents issues in interpreting past activity through metalwork assemblages, these scatters enable site chronologies to be refined in a way not possible using fieldwalking data alone.

documentary evidence suggests that intense metalwork scatters can indeed be interpreted as the residue of occupation. Dense scatters of Thetford ware are, however, occasionally not marked by significant metalwork scatters, particularly surrounding Rendlesham Green (Figure 2.35). This observation has important implications for understanding settlement through ploughzone assemblages. Each of the major concentrations of metalwork is plausibly associated with a manorial site or substantial holding recorded in Domesday;[162] the smaller peasant holdings on the margins of Rendlesham Green are not, however, marked by large scatters of metalwork. Such a pattern again suggests that metalwork scatters are valuable in identifying areas of high-status settlement while potentially overlooking non-elite sites. This pattern is perhaps unsurprising; those living within high status residences were likely to have access to the wealth and status needed to purchase material culture, as well as better access to the trade networks required to acquire such material. With greater quantities of this metalwork circulating in these elite sites, more opportunities existed for this material to be lost and incorporated into ploughzone assemblages.

Those lower-status sites are not, however, marked by a total absence of metalwork; the limited spread of material recovered from the margins of Rendlesham Green suggests that small quantities of metalwork are associated with those settlements of lower status. There are, however, variations in the composition of these assemblages that can differentiate patterns of wealth and status in the past, although these differences are less marked than in earlier centuries, perhaps owing to the proliferation of market centres and the prevalence of freemen of moderate status in clayland East Anglia. While both scatters of high and low status are marked by utilitarian personal possessions such as hooked tags, brooches and strap fittings, areas of high status activity are marked by a much more diverse range of artefacts, such as scabbard chapes, finger rings and jewellery (Figures 2.36 and 2.37).[163] A greater number of these objects are also composed of precious metal; two of the finger rings from the Dock Hill site are, for example, silver. Coinage also appears an indicator of wealth in Late Saxon England. While the Park Field, Dock Hill and Three Corner Tye sites are marked by numerous silver coins, only a single coin has been recovered from the margins of Rendlesham Green.[164] Much as in previous periods, variations in the composition of assemblages, as well as differences in the scale of ploughzone

[162] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 38–41.
[163] Compare, for example, L&L Finds Catalogue RLM038 1110 and EKE021 1115 with RLM014 1041 and RLM013 1341.
[164] L&L Finds Catalogue RLM013 0383 and RLM013 0901.

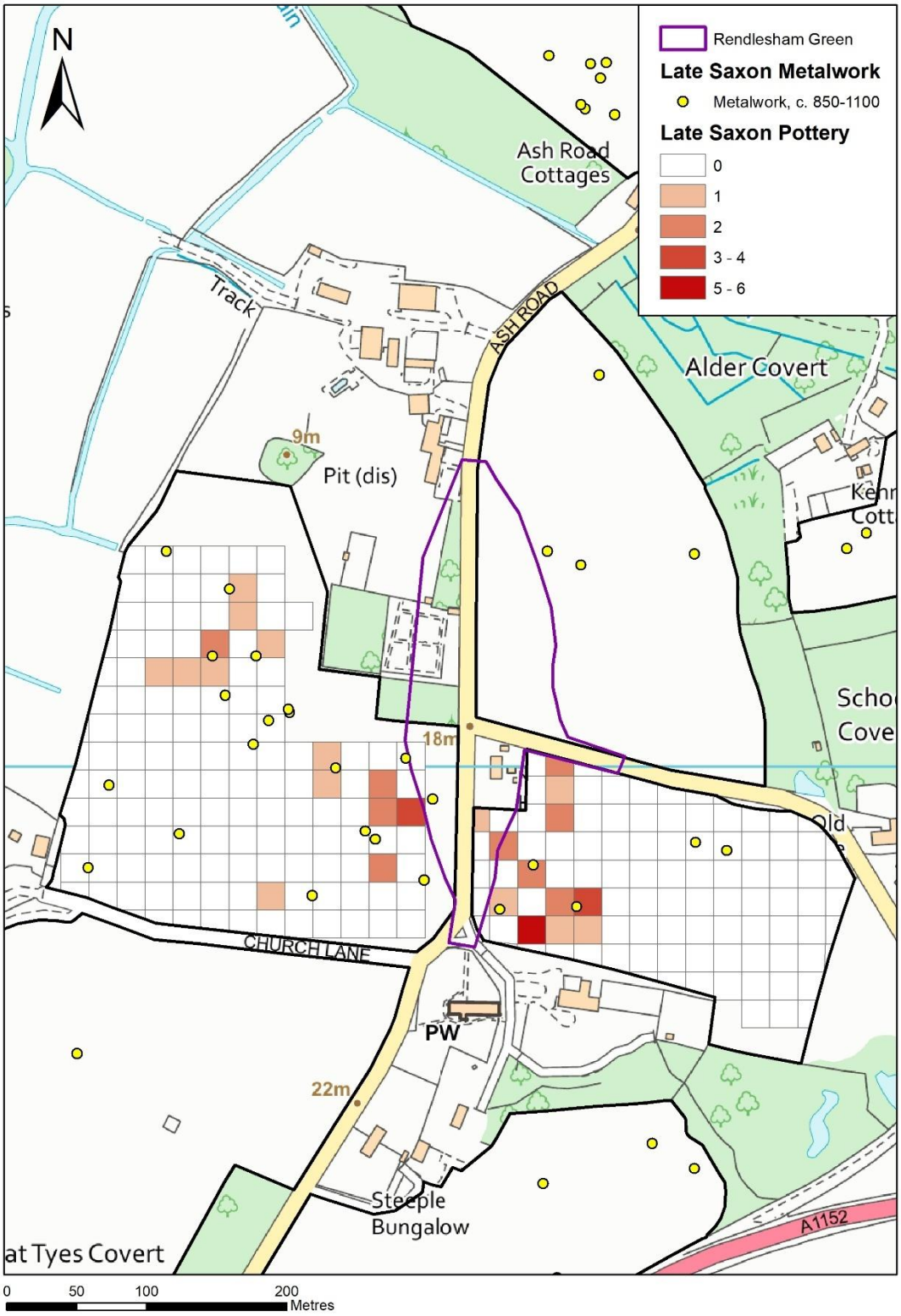

Figure 2.35: The distribution of Late Saxon pottery and metalwork and its association with the former Rendlesham Green.

Figure 2.36: Images from L&L Image Database of objects associated with high status occupation. These elite assemblages often also contain elements more typical of low status occupation. Images not to scale.

1 RLM013 0461 – silver Late Saxon penny of Edward the Confessor.

2 RLM038 1307 – silver Late Saxon ring fragment.

3 RLM038 1299 – copper alloy Late Saxon sword chape fragment.

4 RLM013 0728 – copper alloy Late Saxon harness fragment.

5 RLM013 1035 – copper alloy Late Saxon strap end.

3

4

1

2

5

Figure 2.37: Images from L&L Image Database of objects associated with low status occupation, largely comprised of personal possessions. Images not to scale.

1 RLM014 1067 – copper alloy Late Saxon brooch fragment.

2 RLM014 1106 – copper alloy Late Saxon hooked tag fragment.

3 RLM042 1135 – copper alloy Late Saxon strap fitting.

4 RLM014 1041 – copper alloy Late Saxon hooked tag.

scatters, offer opportunities to understand the wealth and status of settlements in the past. It has been posited that Late Saxon peasant sites may be archaeologically invisible;[165] the evidence from the present case study suggests, instead, that such sites may be identified in the ploughzone, denoted only by spreads of pottery.

[165] Helena Hamerow, 'Overview: Rural Settlement', in *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, ed. Helena Hamerow et al., Oxford Handbooks (Oxford University Press, 2011), 125–26.

Metalwork, Pottery and Late Saxon Agriculture

While the fieldwalking data provides clear evidence for Late Saxon occupation in Rendlesham, there is little evidence for cultivation. The small scatter of Thetford ware recovered from Dog Kennel Field and Collets may perhaps reflect an area of arable cultivation, while a proportion of the pottery recovered from the margins of settlement sites may also represent the manuring of garden plots or infields. The ceramic data does not, however, clearly reveal the wider arable area cultivated from these farmsteads. It is unlikely that this relative lack of manuring scatters represents a complete abandonment of arable farming; rather, other factors surely underpin such patterns. It has been suggested that the Late Saxon period witnessed significant changes in manuring strategies, with arable fields fertilised directly via the folding of livestock, as opposed to using household waste.[166] This lack of manuring scatters may, however, also be a function of the limited quantities of pottery in circulation within occupation sites, as attested by the small number of sherds recovered from settlements within the study area. With little pottery deposited in the middens from which manure was drawn, it is inevitable that few sherds entered arable fields, despite the use of household waste for manure. That manuring scatters become widely apparent in the twelfth century as more pottery came into use in rural farmsteads suggests that the lack of Late Saxon manuring scatters may derive from the limited use of Thetford ware.[167]

While pottery scatters offer limited opportunities for interpreting patterns of Late Saxon cultivation, the distribution of metalwork offers greater insight. A diffuse scatter of material has been recovered, spread widely throughout the study area. The thin nature of this metalwork, as well as its wide distribution suggests that, as in other periods, this material, in part at least, derives from manuring. Such a taphonomic pathway is most viable for those objects that are unlikely to have been routinely carried in the arable landscape, such as the furniture mount recovered from Black Croft (Figure 2.38).

[166] Jones, 'Signatures', 187.

[167] Tom Williamson, 'Agriculture, Lords and Landscape in Medieval England', in *New Perspectives on the Medieval 'Agricultural Revolution'*, ed. Mark McKerracher and Helena Hamerow, Crop, Stock and Furrow (Liverpool University Press, 2022), 221.

Figure: 2.38 L&L Image database RLM043 1017 – a copper alloy Late Saxon mount from Black Croft. Such objects, unlikely to be carried during work in the arable landscape, were likely incorporated with manure before being spread across arable fields.

The association between thin scatters of metalwork and those most agriculturally viable soils adds further weight to the conflation of these scatters of material and the spreading of household waste. As in earlier periods, diffuse spreads of metalwork occur on those areas of Newport 2 soils, as well as the sloping soils of the Burlingham Association; such soils, while moderately fertile, were easy to cultivate, draining freely of water (Figures 2.39 and 2.40). That these thin scatters of metalwork are associated with those most agriculturally viable soils, at least in terms of arable cultivation, implies that these diffuse metalwork scatters are indeed derived from the spreading of household waste throughout arable fields.

It has been posited above that there is an apparent relationship between elite settlements and scatters of metalwork in the plough soil. While pottery scatters denote settlements at all levels of the social scale, large metalwork scatters, particularly those comprised of elite indicators such as coinage, are apparently associated with only higher status farmsteads or households. This observation has clear implications for understanding Late Saxon cultivation patterns. If dense scatters of metalwork are best understood in terms of high-status settlement activity, then it can be suggested that thin metalwork manuring scatters may often result from land manured using waste from manorial centres, possibly reflecting, therefore, manorial demesnes. While pottery scatters can elucidate those areas of the arable landscape manured using waste derived from settlements at all levels of the social scale, thin metalwork scatters are more closely associated with areas owned by manorial lords or locally significant landholders.

It cannot be discounted, of course, that some of this material may have entered the soil during the course of agricultural activity, such as cultivation. This taphonomic pathway is most likely for those personal possessions routinely worn in the arable landscape such as brooches and hooked tags.[168] Yet, such casual loss may also have resulted in more intense scatters of material in areas

[168] Artefacts such as L&L Finds Catalogue RLM042 1084, RLM036 1328 and RLM044 1583 can be interpreted in this way.

of manorial demesne. While labour services were often less onerous in East Anglia than in other areas, manorial lords were able to call upon large numbers of labourers to undertake tasks at bottlenecks in the agricultural year.[169] Although these labourers were inevitably of lower status and, therefore, only had limited quantities of utilitarian metalwork items such as buckles, with large numbers of labourers working in the fields, a greater chance existed for material to be lost and incorporated within ploughzone assemblages; such large labour forces operating in areas of demesne may, therefore, have resulted in more intense scatters of material in these areas.

Although much of the metalwork assemblage is associated with amenable soils, a small number of finds, largely personal possessions, extend onto less favourable soils, such as those on the plateau to the north. These finds again likely represent casual losses, but those made during everyday activities such as livestock management as opposed to arable farming. With farmers moving throughout the pastoral landscape with herds of livestock, it is inevitable that objects became lost and incorporated within later ploughzone assemblages. These scatters are, however, difficult to separate from those representing casual losses made in the arable landscape (Figures 2.41). The density of these scatters may go some way to enabling the ploughzone signatures representing cultivation and livestock husbandry to be differentiated. The management of livestock is significantly less labour intensive than arable cultivation. Scatters of ploughzone metalwork associated with livestock farming are, therefore, likely less dense than those representative of both occupation and cultivation, a suggestion corroborated by the limited metalwork scatter associated with Rendlesham Green. Only two pieces of metalwork are associated with the Green, the Late Saxon origins of which have been attested through excavation, suggesting that, while metalwork scatters can be associated with livestock husbandry, only those most thin scatters can be interpreted in this way.

[169] Mark Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk: An Economic and Social History, 1200 - 1500* (Boydell, 2010), 27-34.

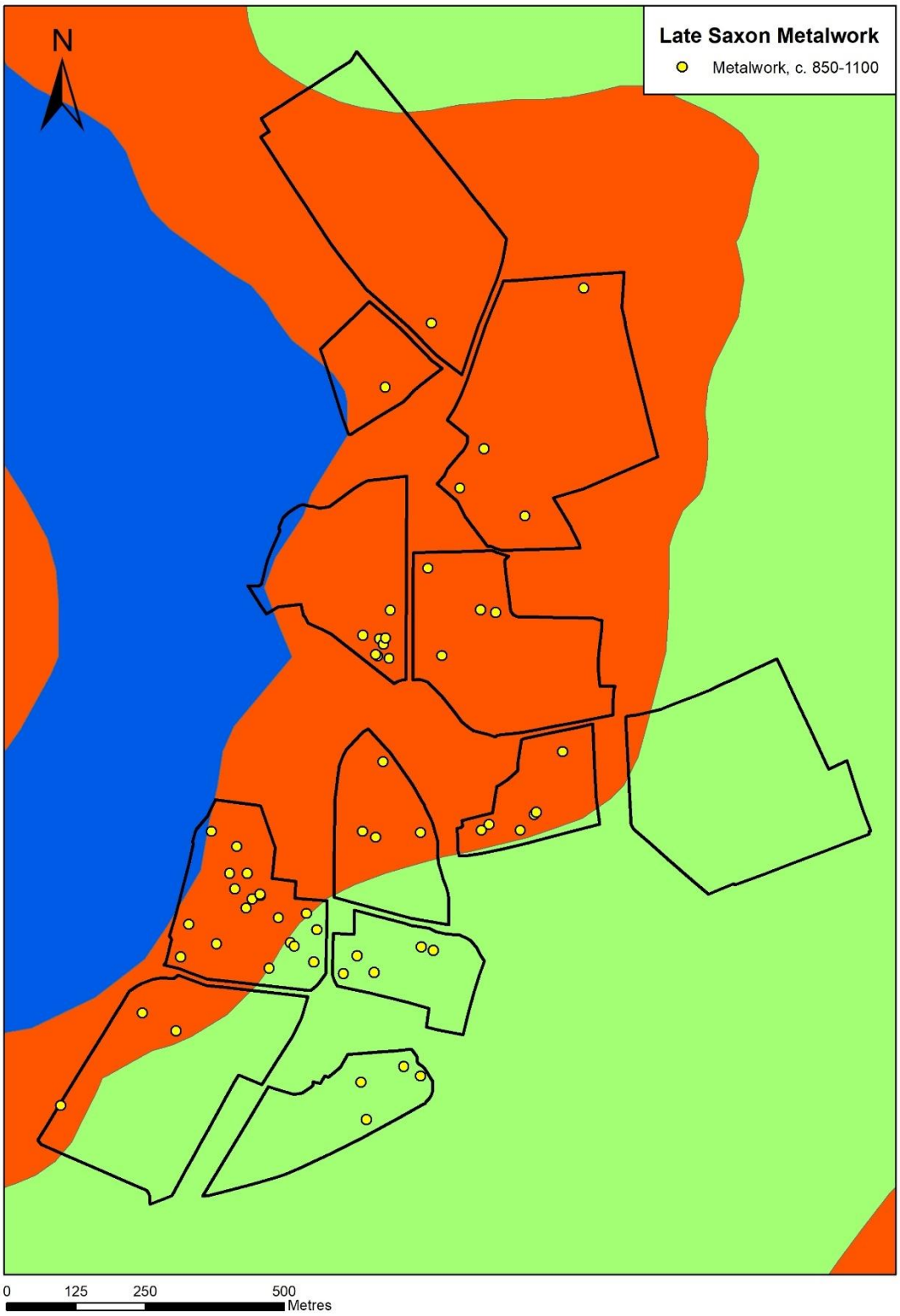

Figure 2.39: The distribution of Late Saxon metalwork and its association with the dominant soils of the Rendlesham study area.

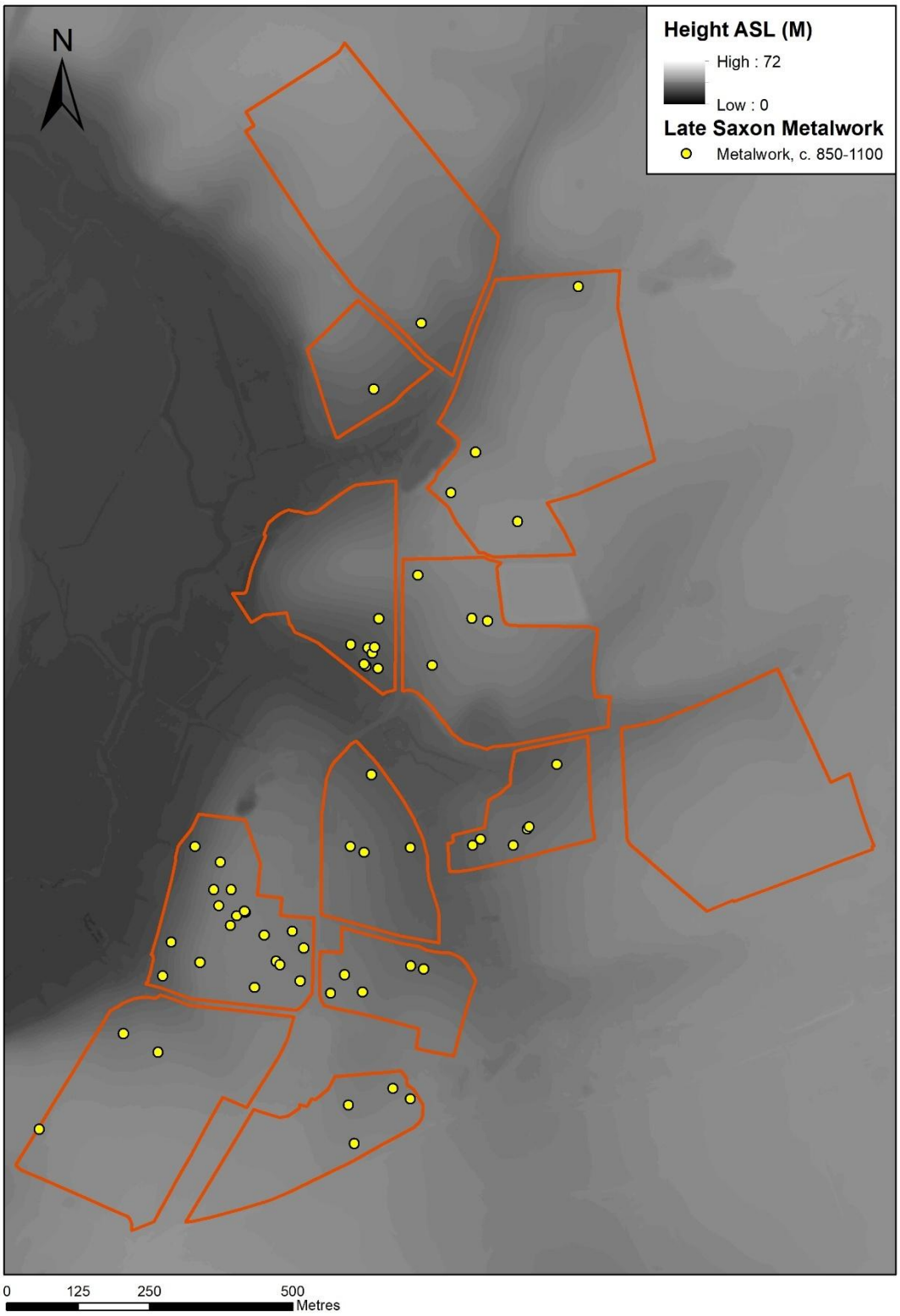

Figure 2.40: The distribution of Late Saxon metalwork and its association with the topography of the Rendlesham case study area.

Figure 2.41: Images from L&L Image Database of personal possessions associated with both arable and livestock farming. The integration of pottery scatters into studies of the past enables arable fields to be differentiated from grazing grounds. Left – RLM038 1005 – copper alloy Late Saxon hooked tag. Right – RLM037 1479 – copper alloy Late Saxon brooch fragment. Each of these objects may derive from both arable farming and the management of herds of livestock. The integration of both pottery and metalwork into studies of the past enables these activities to be differentiated. Images not to scale.

The incorporation of pottery and metalwork into a single study again enables greater definition of these activities. Those scatters of metalwork that are coterminous with spreads of pottery can be associated with arable farming, although the limited quantities of pottery in circulation at this time may, to some extent, limit the efficacy of this approach. Spreads of personal possessions recovered from areas in which no pottery has been found, such as Foxburgh South are, meanwhile, likely associated with livestock husbandry; only through the integration of pottery and metalwork into a single study can the most accurate interpretation of the landscape be gained.

High Medieval Settlement and Ploughzone Archaeology, *c*. 1100-1350

The pottery assemblage presents a complex picture of High Medieval Rendlesham, with widespread and long-lived activity apparent (Figure 2.42). Numerous dense scatters of pottery reflecting settlement sites are evident in the study area. Perhaps the most significant of these lies in the western corner of Kitchen Piece, associated with, and perhaps extending beneath, the rectory. As suggested above, this was likely the site of a residence associated with a large holding at the time of Domesday. A further site is implied by the spread of pottery extending towards Naunton Hall in Park Field, again attesting the presence of occupation beneath the currently occupied settlement core. Settlement on the High House site is also attested in the fieldwalking data, marked by a spread of pottery extending towards the margins of the non-arable land surrounding the currently occupied farmstead. A series of minor sites are also suggested in the

ceramic data, ghosting the former margins of Rendlesham Green in both Park Field and Kitchen Piece. Such evidence, once again, suggests that pottery scatters reflect occupation sites at all levels of the social hierarchy.

The metalwork data is, however, more complex (Figure 2.43). The extensive assemblage consists of a wide suite of artefacts, such as coins, brooches and strap fittings alongside other less common artefacts such as book clasps and seal matrices.[170] Manorial sites, such as those associated with Naunton Hall and High House, are clearly reflected in the metal detecting data; such evidence again corroborates the recurrent association between dense spreads of metalwork and elite occupation. Such patterns are, again, unsurprising. The greater wealth and status of these members of the elite enabled the purchase of larger quantities, and, indeed, a more diverse range, of material culture compared with members of the lower classes; such patterns may have been exacerbated by the increase in trade offering access to new markets. With more of this material circulating in elite sites, it is inevitable that greater quantities of metalwork were lost or discarded into middens, becoming incorporated into ploughzone assemblages.

While high-status settlements are clearly reflected in scatters of metalwork, the peasant farmsteads in Kitchen Piece, Park Field and Black Croft are less clear in the metal detecting dataset. This again implies that low-status occupation is poorly represented in metalwork assemblages, with those farmsteads strung along Rendlesham Green, the existence of which has been attested by excavation and geophysics, marked by only a thin spread of material. This is not to suggest that peasant farmsteads are marked by a total absence of metalwork in the plough soil; the small quantity of finds recovered from the western margin of the Green in Kitchen Piece suggests that small quantities of material are associated with settlements of the lower classes. Rather, it is here argued that higher status sites are marked by extensive spreads of metalwork, while peasant farmsteads are more clearly reflected in ceramic assemblages.

[170] See, for example, L&L Finds Catalogue RLM013 0777, RLM038 1132 and RLM037 1399.

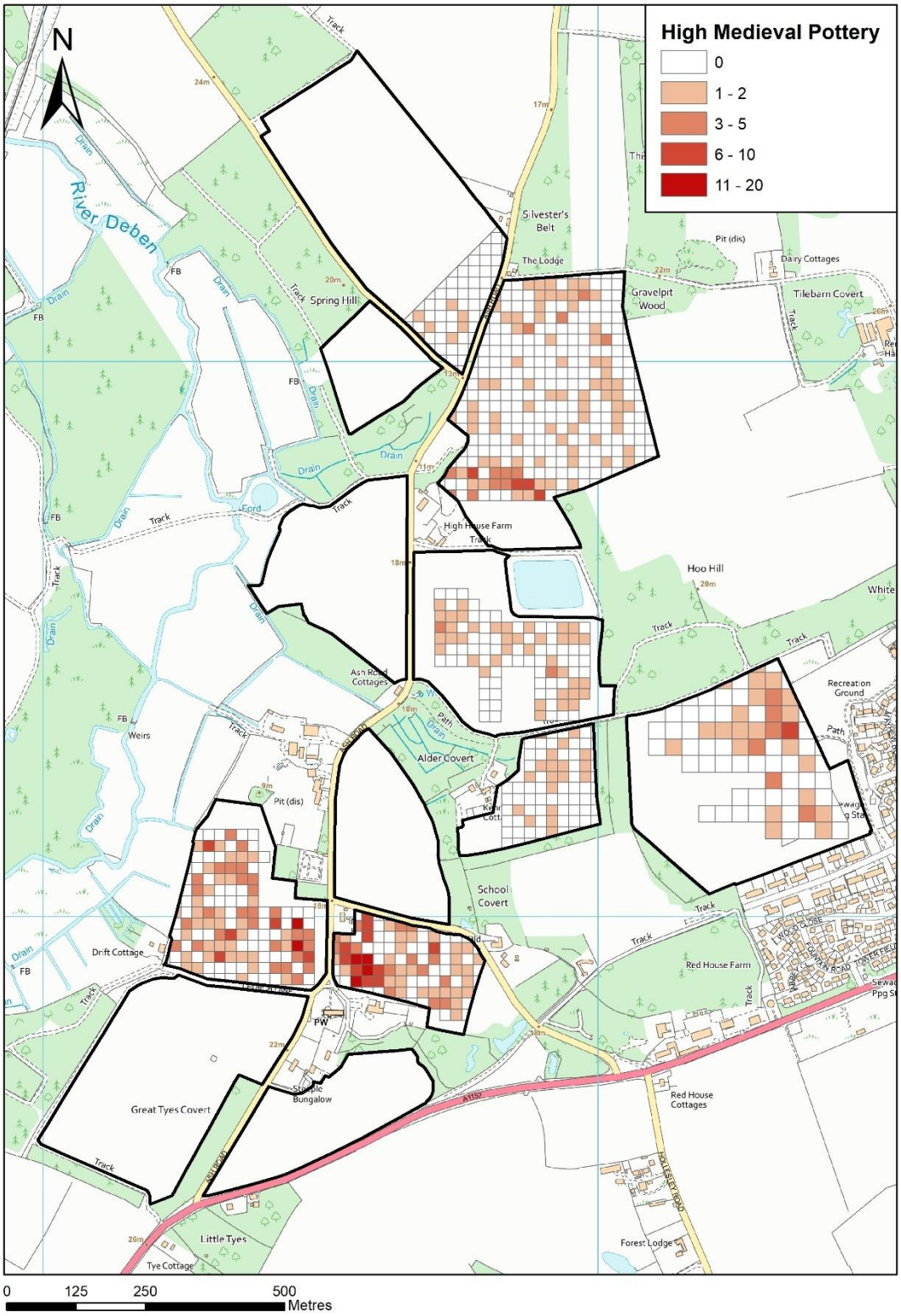

Figure 2.42: The distribution of Medieval pottery in the Rendlesham study area.

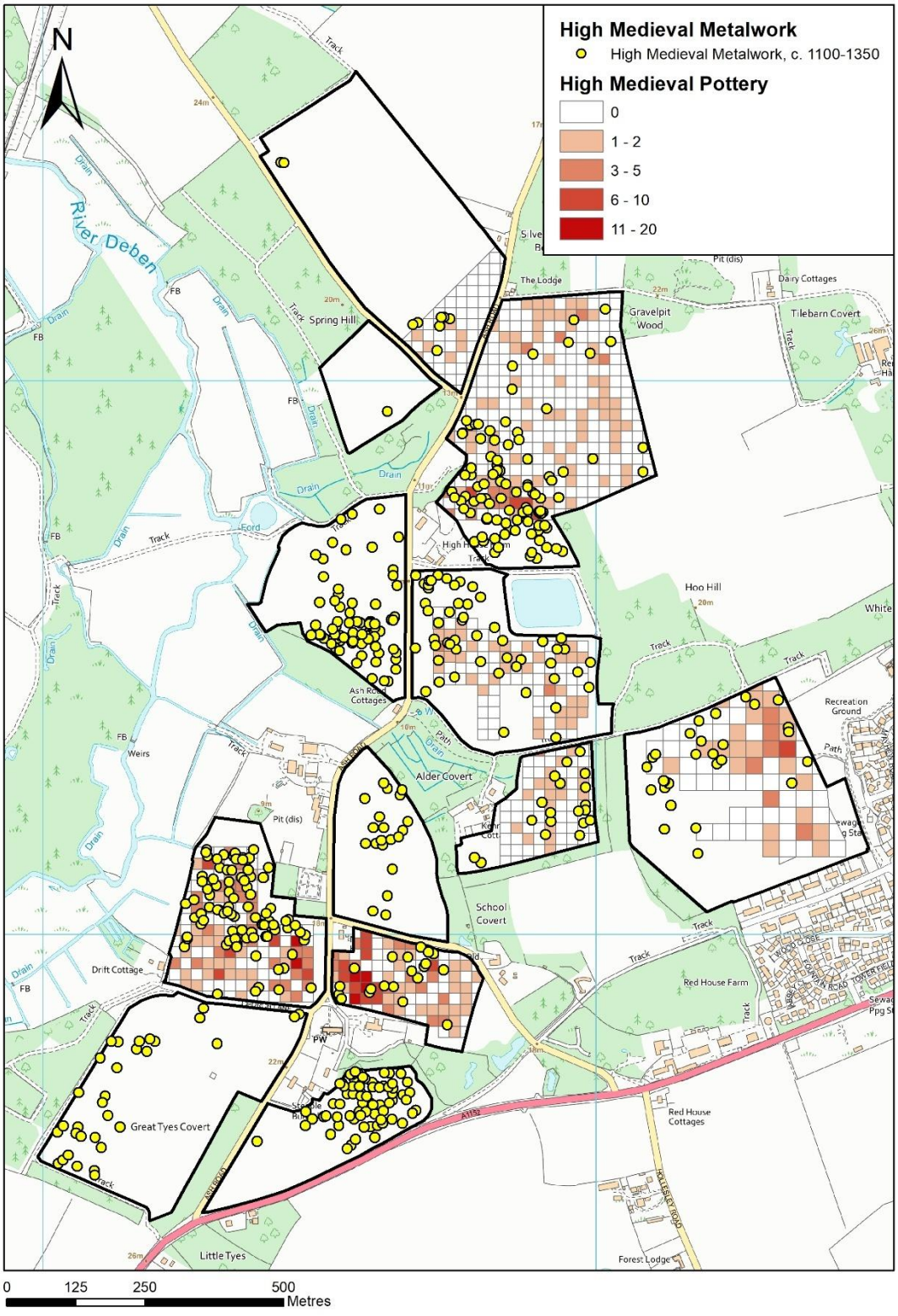

Figure 2.43: The distribution of High Medieval metalwork in the Rendlesham survey area and its association with the scatters of pottery recovered while fieldwalking.

There are also important variations in the composition of assemblages recovered from sites of varying status that further enable the differentiation of elite sites from those of the peasantry. As in earlier centuries, both elite and peasant settlements are marked by utilitarian items such as buckles and strap fittings. High-status settlements are denoted, however, by a more diverse suite of material culture, particularly those objects associated with elite activities such as literacy, equestrianism and warfare, denoted by objects such as book clasps, harness pendants and scabbard fittings.[171] Although small quantities of coinage are also apparent on lower status sites, such as those surrounding Rendlesham Green, coinage is apparent in much larger quantities, and, indeed, in larger denominations, on those sites of higher status. Seal matrices also appear associated with high status activity. Eight seal matrices have been recovered from the Rendlesham study area, each of which are associated with high status manorial activity.[172] Such a pattern is perhaps unsurprising; seal matrices have long been associated with bureaucracy and literacy, activities that were largely the preserve of the elite. Yet, such objects, as well as objects associated with elite identities, suggest that variations in both the composition and scale of assemblages offer opportunities to separate high status sites from the settlements of the peasantry in a way not possible using ceramic scatters alone.

Pottery, Metalwork, and High Medieval Farming, *c*. 1100-1350

Each field surveyed produced a thin scatter of High Medieval pottery, attesting the manuring of arable fields using household refuse. There are, however, variations in the density of these scatters; while arable activity on sites such as Park Field is denoted by comparatively dense spreads of pottery, other sites, such as Hut Field and Collets, are picked out by much more diffuse scatters. As in all periods, the density of pottery in the plough soil is associated with the quantities of household manure applied to the land; such patterns may, therefore, plausibly be associated with the intensity of manuring on each of these sites. The very heaviest of soils, such as Hut Field, appear to have been manured only sporadically, perhaps owing to the tendency of such soils to hold nutrients more easily, rarely becoming leached, requiring less frequent applications of manure to maintain fertility. The distance decay model may also have impacted the varying distribution of pottery throughout the study area.

The metalwork assemblage is strewn throughout the landscape in scatters of varying densities. At a most basic level, that these diffuse spreads of metalwork are broadly coterminous with

[171] Steven Ashley, 'Anglo-Norman Elite Objects from Castle and Countryside', in *Castles and the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. John Davies et al. (Oxbow Books, 2016).
[172] See, for example, L&L Finds Catalogue RLM013 018, RLM038 1020 and RLM037.

those ceramic manuring scatters suggests that this material is the product of arable farming; such objects were likely lost or discarded within settlement sites, carried to arable fields with domestic waste, entering the plough soil during manuring. This taphonomic pathway is likely for those objects such as coins and furniture mounts that are unlikely to have been routinely carried while working in the countryside, although the possibility that the spreads of personal possessions recovered from areas such as Dog Kennel Field and Black Croft derive from similar activities cannot be discounted.[173] That this material conforms to the distance decay model of manuring further suggests that this metalwork is associated with arable farming.

While it has been evidenced above that thin scatters of metalwork may be interpreted as evidence of cultivation, further patterning is apparent in the dataset. While some areas of manuring highlighted by ceramic scatters are also marked by spreads of metalwork, areas such as the east end of Kitchen Field are largely devoid of such material, despite pottery scatters attesting contemporary cultivation in the area. As argued above, there is an association between the relative wealth of occupation and the extent and nature of ploughzone assemblages associated with settlement sites; it is this that plausibly structures the varied distribution of metalwork in the study area.

Much of the metalwork assemblage is associated with manorial sites and high-status occupation, while the farmsteads and middens of the lower classes are demarcated by pottery scatters and only occasional utilitarian metal objects. With larger quantities of metalwork circulating in manorial sites, greater numbers of artefacts entered middens, becoming incorporated into manure. Metalwork manuring scatters may, therefore, demarcate areas of demesne land, or the lands manured using waste from these elite sites at least. It has been suggested that much of Rendlesham was, in the fourteenth century, and in all likelihood earlier, largely farmed as extensive manorial demesne;[174] it is in this context that the spreads of High Medieval metalwork covering much of the study area should be seen. With much of the land manured using waste derived from elite settlement, significant quantities of metalwork were scattered throughout the arable landscape. Areas such as Steeple Tye, Dock Hill and Collets, as well as parts of Park Field and Kitchen Piece, may have been farmed directly as manorial demesne, while areas such as the south of Steeple Tye and parts of Kitchen Piece and Black Croft may have formed the holdings of peasant farmers, either in open fields or arable closes. The

[173] L&L Finds Catalogue RLM013 0525, RLM043 1076 and RLM043 1077. Depictions of medieval cultivators, such as those from the Lutrell Psalter, show workers such as ploughmen carrying no purse, suggesting coinage was not frequently carried in the fields. See Christopher Dyer, 'Peasants and Coins: The Uses of Money in the Middle Ages', *British Numismatic Journal* 67 (1997): 36.
[174] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 153–55.

identification of areas of demesne land through metalwork assemblages is, of course tentative; such interpretation is, however, only possible through the integration of pottery and metalwork scatters into a single study.

A proportion of this material may also have entered the ploughzone during the course of work in arable fields. Such a taphonomic pathway is again most plausible for those dress accessories routinely worn during arable farming, such as brooches and buckles, although the possibility that some of this material may have entered the fields with manure cannot be discounted. Some of this metalwork may also have entered the wider landscape during the course of other farming activities, such as the grazing of animals on rough ground and wood pasture. Scatters representing casual losses made while cultivating arable land and livestock husbandry are virtually indistinguishable in terms of composition. Livestock farming scatters may, as in earlier periods, be less dense than their arable counterparts, a notion again attested by Rendlesham Green. Although evidently an area of intense livestock farming, Rendlesham Green is marked by a near total absence of material, suggesting that grazing activities, while indeed leaving material in the plough soil, do so in small quantities.

The incorporation of pottery and metalwork into a single study offers, however, greater precision. As in earlier centuries, where thin spreads of pottery and dress accessories are coterminous, it can be suggested that the assemblage likely represents arable cultivation, while, on the other hand, those scatters of metalwork recovered from areas in which no pottery has been found likely derive from livestock husbandry. Only by considering both pottery and metalwork in a single study can the most accurate interpretation of the landscape be obtained.

Conclusion: Ploughzone Archaeology and Past Activity

Although based on the results of a single site, it has been demonstrated above for the first time that pottery and metalwork scatters offer differing, yet complementary, insight into the various activities that occurred in the rural landscape. Pottery scatters demarcate areas of settlement, waste disposal and arable farming at all levels of the social scale, offering relatively complete insight into a limited range of activities, particularly the settlements and fields of the lower classes. The density of these scatters is associated with the intensity of activity in the landscape. While it cannot be denied that metalwork scatters also occur in areas of lower-class activity, such material is more closely related to the settlement sites, and, significantly, the fields of the elite. In all periods, comparatively large scatters of metalwork reflect areas of elite settlement, while thinner spreads of material are more typically associated with low status sites. The composition of these assemblages also offers opportunities to identify social hierarchies. Elite

indicator objects, such as precious metal jewellery, weapons fittings and coinage are associated with high status settlement, while more utilitarian objects, such as copper alloy buckles and brooches are found on settlements at all levels of the social hierarchy, although the precise composition of these assemblages varies between periods.

A wide suite of activities, including livestock husbandry, are also represented in metalwork assemblages, manifested as thin scatters of material spread widely throughout the landscape; such activities leave few other traces in the archaeological record. Although metalwork scatters reveal the traces of livestock husbandry, separating these from spreads of material deriving from casual losses made during arable farming is problematic; only through the integration of pottery and metalwork into a single study is this possible.

While, as discussed in Chapter One, there are issues inherent in the employment of both fieldwalking and metal detecting methodologies, ploughzone assemblages have much to contribute to understanding of the landscape; indeed, scatters of pottery from the plough soil have provided a base upon which many current interpretations of the historic countryside have been built. Yet, both pottery and metalwork assemblages have not previously been integrated into a single study, despite the potential insights this can provide. The methodology developed above will now be applied to previously unpublished datasets at a landscape scale in an environmentally diverse area of the East Suffolk countryside to further understanding of the development of settlement and the landscape from the later Roman period until the mid-fourteenth century.

Chapter Three: Sources and Methods

As laid out above, taking a 'blended approach' to the use of ploughzone archaeological datasets offers inherent benefits compared to relying on fieldwalking or metal detecting datasets alone; it is this approach that will be taken in the following chapters. Before this is possible, however, the datasets upon which this discussion is based must be laid out. It is this that forms the subject of this chapter.

Sources: The Survey in the Deben Valley

The fieldwalking data upon which the ensuing chapters are based is the results of the 'Survey in the Deben Valley' carried out by John Newman in the 1980s and 1990s. This fieldwork formed part of an ambitious project to understand the Roman and Anglo-Saxon settlement pattern of the entirety of the Kingdom of East Anglia, the rationale of which has been laid out elsewhere.[175] The project intended to move beyond a 'site-specific approach' in order to understand the 'social and economic context' of the Sutton Hoo cemetery, the latest excavations of which had recently been initiated.[176] The aims of the project were, however, never realised, and the resultant survey instead interrogated a 216 km^2 block of land spread across 37 parishes, centred around Sutton Hoo and the Deben valley.[177] A total of 4971 hectares (678 fields) were surveyed over multiple seasons of fieldwalking.

While the results of this fieldwalking have been partially published, the analysis of this dataset has not been taken to its fullest extent; the work of Newman has largely focussed on mapping Roman and early medieval 'sites' of activity, rather than offering a fuller interpretation of the landscape of East Suffolk.[178] Indeed, the data remains as over 2000 unpublished paper maps, fieldwalking records and finds sheets lodged with the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (HER);

[175] John Newman, 'East Anglian Kingdom Pilot Survey', in *Looking at the Land: Archaeological Landscapes in Eastern England - Recent Work and Future Directions*, ed. Michael Parker Pearson and R. T. Schadla-Hall (Leicestershire Museums, 1994).
[176] John Newman, 'Survey in the Deben Valley', in *Sutton Hoo: A Seventh-Century Princely Burial Ground and Its Context*, ed. Martin Carver (British Museum Press, 2005), 477.
[177] While some of the parishes, such as Sutton, were extensively surveyed, only a single field was surveyed in parishes such as Otley.
[178] Newman, 'East Anglian Kingdom Survey'; John Newman, 'The Late Roman and Anglo-Saxon Settlement Pattern in the Sandlings of Suffolk', in *Sutton Hoo: A Seventh-Century Princely Burial Ground and Its Context*, ed. Martin Carver (British Museum Press, 2005); Newman, 'Deben Valley'; John Newman, 'A Landscape of Dispersed Settlement - Change and Growth in South East Suffolk', *Medieval Settlement Research Group Annual Report* 15 (2000): 7–8.

these records have not, until now, been mapped in their entirety and analysed as a whole.[179] A full methodological statement regarding this archive is provided in Appendix Two.

The fieldwalking assemblage consists of 17,759 sherds of pottery dating from the later Roman period to the High Middle Ages. As discussed in Chapter One, the quantities of pottery recovered from each of these periods are inherently variable, related, in part, to contemporary patterns of pottery use and the friability of each of these ceramic types. (Table 3.1).

Period	**Number of Sherds**
Later Roman	4,954
Early Saxon	163
Middle Saxon	216
Late Saxon	261
High Medieval	12,165

Table 3.1: the number of pottery sherds recovered by Newman in the study area. Source: DVSA 1-37.

The fieldwalking carried out by Newman followed the transect method, with a 20m spacing employed. Although the flaws in this methodology have been laid out in Chapter One, this dataset represents a valuable resource to understand the development of the landscape in an environmentally diverse swathe of the East Suffolk countryside (see Chapter Four).

While each of the fields were initially walked using the transect method, fields that yielded evidence of Early and Middle Saxon activity were also investigated using the more intensive grid method. Although this produced large quantities of archaeological material, the use of varying methodologies within the same survey presents issues of interpretation. It is unclear in the fieldwork archive which fields were subject to more intensive survey and, therefore, it is difficult to mitigate against the greater quantity of material recovered from these sites owing to differing patterns of searching, as opposed to real historic patterns. Such issues may serve to overemphasise the extent of activity in those fields subject to this more intensive searching, although this is unlikely to substantially alter the results.

[179] Indeed, the East of England Middle and Late Saxon Regional Research Framework suggests that the full analysis of the Survey in the Deben Valley is needed. See Richard Hoggett and Gareth Davies, *Middle to Late Anglo-Saxon Resource Assessment*, https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/resource-assessments/middle-and-late-anglo-saxon/ Accessed 10/03/2025.

Sources: The Portable Antiquities Scheme

As well as high quality fieldwalking data, a large and chronologically diverse assemblage of metalwork has been recorded via the PAS in the study area. A total of 6,165 finds have been recorded in the 37 parishes studied as of the 6th of September 2024, 2,975 of which date from *c*. AD 250-1350 (Table 3.2). Although this assemblage represents an important resource for understanding the landscape, there are clear variations in the scale of the dataset between periods. While, for example, the later Roman and High Medieval periods are marked by extensive scatters of metalwork, the Middle Saxon period is poorly represented in the PAS dataset, owing to the decline of furnished burial and the relatively limited population of the period.

Biases in the spatial distribution of the dataset are also apparent (Figure 3.1). While 1,356 finds of all periods have been recovered from Sutton, for example, no data has been recorded with the PAS in parishes such as Boulge and Kesgrave. While the lack of finds in Kesgrave is easily explained, as much of the parish lies under modern development, the total lack of finds from typical rural parishes such as Debach is less clear; such patterns may derive from limited metal detecting taking place due to landowners withholding permission, metal detecting that has gone unrecorded or a genuine lack of metalwork in these areas in the past. These parishes highlight a wider pattern; the intensity of metal detecting in the study area, as well as the scale of artefact recording, are not uniform. As the intensity of searching is not recorded by the PAS, recovery bias in the dataset cannot be mitigated against.

These issues reflect a wider difficulty presented by PAS data; as those areas in which metal detecting has taken place are not recorded, it is problematic to suggest that areas of absence in PAS data are representative of genuine historic patterns as opposed to modern recovery bias.[180] Although some have suggested that the distribution of artefacts in Eastern England has 'a basis in ancient patterns of settlement',[181] it is apparent that the overall distribution of PAS data is mediated by the patterns of searching by detectorists; such problems must be confronted for PAS data to be able to provide meaningful insight into landscape change.

To counter such issues, the total distribution of all metalwork within the study area has been mapped. Those fields from which a single metalwork find has been recorded with the PAS have

[180] Brindle, *Roman Britain*, 15–21.
[181] John Naylor and Julian Richards, 'Detecting the Past: Interpreting Early Medieval Settlement Patterns Through Portable Antiquities', *Medieval Settlement Research Group Annual Report* 20 (2005): 19–24.

clearly been subject to metal detecting, the results of which have been recorded; as such, the absence of finds from any given period from such sites can be attributed to genuine historic patterns as opposed to patterns of searching.[182]

The PAS dataset has been 'cleaned' following the process laid out by Blair and Brindle.[183] While much of the spatial data from the PAS is recorded to a high level of accuracy, a number of erroneous findspots are apparent, such as finds recorded in the incorrect parish or in the sea; these entries have been removed. Inaccurate findspots, such as finds centred on the parish from which they were recovered, have similarly been discounted. More minor errors, such as finds assigned incorrect findspots in the correct parish, may, however, have gone unnoticed and, therefore, remain in the dataset. Such issues are negligible at the scale of the present study, however.

There are evidently issues in the use of PAS data to understand the past, not least the unclear and apparently random patterns of searching by detectorists that have generated the PAS assemblage. The lack of recording of the areas searched presents similar problems; such complications must be considered throughout the following analysis. Yet, these issues are not insurmountable and, once overtly faced, the PAS offers an extensive and diverse dataset that has vast potential for understanding the historic landscape.

Period	**Number of Finds**
Late Roman (c. AD 250-410)	1767
Early Anglo-Saxon (c. 410-700)	171
Middle Anglo-Saxon (c. 700-850)	73
Late Anglo-Saxon (c. 850-1100)	119
High Medieval (c. 1100-1350)	787

Table 3.2: the quantities of metalwork recorded with the PAS in the study area dating from the period here under interrogation. It is clear that some periods are better represented in the PAS dataset than others. Source: PAS.

[182] Non-metalwork finds have been excluded from this analysis as these do not certainly derive from metal detecting and do not, therefore, reflect patterns of searching by detectorists.
[183] Blair, *Building Anglo-Saxon England*, 17; Brindle, *Roman Britain*, 20.

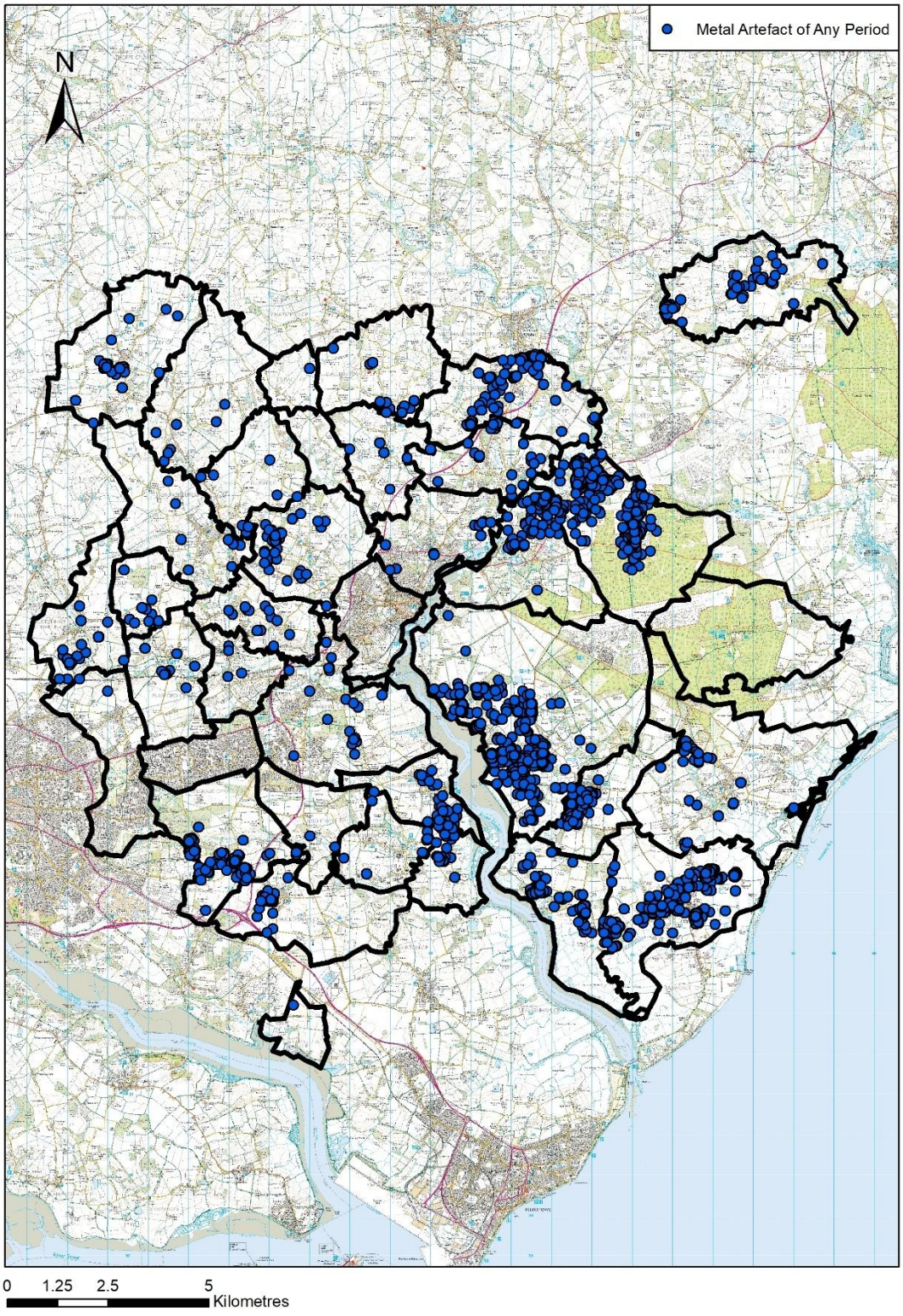

Figure 3.1: the distribution of PAS data of all periods from prehistory to the post-medieval period in the study area. It can be suggested that those fields from which a single find from any period have been recovered have been subject to metal detecting, the results of which have been recorded. Source: PAS.

Methods: Ceramic Site Definition

As highlighted in Chapter One, the interpretation of fieldwalking data has long relied upon the use of 'sites' to describe concentrations of ploughzone pottery, a term often used interchangeably with 'settlement'.[184] Such terms are well entrenched within academic tradition and offer a universal way in which concentrations of pottery can be described without excavation.

Some have taken a binary approach to defining these areas of intense past activity, suggesting that the landscape can be divided into 'sites' and 'non-sites'.[185] In such models, scatters falling below the site threshold are usually interpreted as the residue of historic manuring. Using such a method offers 'a general view of occupation and landscape evolution in … areas that were a focus of attention in the past',[186] allowing the easy, although somewhat oversimplistic, identification and interpretation of past activity through ploughzone assemblages.

Others, however, have argued against the use of 'sites' as an interpretative framework, suggesting that such approaches conflate multi-use and dynamic landscapes with simple points on a distribution map.[187] Although dense concentrations of pottery may represent settlement sites, many complex processes can engender the build-up of ceramic material in the plough soil;[188] to view these scatters simply in terms of settlement neglects the many interrelated processes that contribute to the formation of the archaeological record. Indeed, diffuse scatters recovered from the landscape surrounding these 'sites' can offer as much information about the past as the dense scatters themselves.[189]

Despite the long debate surrounding the definition of 'sites' of activity, little consensus has been reached regarding the interpretation of past activity from scatters of ploughzone pottery. In the present study, period-specific schemes of categorisation will be used, accounting for variations in the friability of pottery and the amount of material in circulation. It has been demonstrated above that dense scatters of pottery often reflect settlement sites of all periods, while more diffuse scatters of ceramics reflect cultivation and manuring of varying intensity. Hence, the

[184] Rogerson et al., *Barton Bendish and Caldecote*.
[185] Fleming, *A Persistence of Place*, 21–23.
[186] A. J. Schofield, ed., 'Understanding Early Medieval Pottery Distributions: Cautionary Tales and Their Implications for Further Research', *Antiquity* 63 (1989): 466.
[187] Williamson, 'Site, Settlement, Landscape', 6.
[188] Robert Foley, 'Off-Site Archaeology: An Alternative Approach for the Short-Sited', in *Pattern of the Past: Studies in Honour of David Clarke*, ed. Ian Hodder et al. (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 157–83.
[189] Williamson, 'Site, Settlement, Landscape'.

scatters of pottery recovered by Newman will be divided into those likely representing occupation sites, and scatters of high, moderate and low density that reflect manuring of varying intensity.[190] Metalwork scatters will then be used to nuance this interpretative framework.

Methods: Understanding 'The Survey in the Deben Valley'

The basic unit of analysis employed throughout the following chapters is the modern arable field.[191] While a somewhat coarse unit of study, considering pottery scatters on a field-by-field basis has precedents elsewhere and is impactful when working at a multi-parish scale. As suggested in Chapter One, the boundaries of arable fields also mark the maximum extent to which pottery from buried deposits may have been distributed by cultivation, suggesting that the material from any given period contained within a single field is related, although scatters that predate the establishment of modern field boundaries can, on occasion, extend into adjacent fields.

There are, however, issues with employing such a large and varied survey unit. Using fields as a unit of analysis may result in the complexities of the landscape being understated, with multiple activities that occurred within the confines of a modern field conflated into a single activity. A settlement surrounded by arable fields contained within a single modern field boundary will, for example, be viewed as a single scatter which may result in some of the intricacies of the past being overlooked. Such issues are, however, negligible at larger scales.

Perhaps the most pertinent place to begin to categorise the pottery scatters recovered by Newman is through comparison to other fieldwalking studies. Opportunities to compare the results of fieldwalking are, however, limited by variations in methodologies; indeed, some, such as Peter Wade-Martins, have made little effort to overtly state the methodologies employed, further complicating comparisons.[192]

Jones, has, however, laid out the methodology employed in the Whittlewood project and it is this that will be followed here.[193] The density of material within each field per hectare has been calculated, enabling variations in the size of modern fields to be mitigated.[194] In order to

[190] While settlement sites may be denoted by dense pottery scatters, dwellings may also be identified by the absence of sherds due to the removal of pottery from households to middens. These sites may appear as localised gaps in wider manuring scatters. See Jones and Hooke, 'Methodological Approaches', 39.
[191] This follows the methodology laid out by Jones. See Jones, 'Signatures', 162–63.
[192] Peter Wade-Martins, *Fieldwork and Excavation on Village Sites in Launditch Hundred*, no. 10 (East Anglian Archaeology, 1980), 4–5.
[193] Jones, 'Signatures', 162–63.
[194] The smallest field in the study area was 0.2 hectares while the largest was some 35 hectares.

establish these sherd densities, the total surface population of each area per period has been calculated. [195] As noted above, Newman employed the transect method of fieldwalking using 20m transect spacing. An individual worker can cover an area of approximately 2m of ground along each transect, implying that Newman surveyed 10% of the total area of each field. The quantities of material recovered by Newman were, therefore, multiplied by 10 to estimate the total population of sherds that were available for recovery across the entire field surface before being divided by the area of the field. While there are issues when using the density of sherds over an entire field to understand historic activity, particularly the underrepresentation of dense, spatially limited concentrations of material recovered from larger fields, using the overall sherd density of each field proves most appropriate to enable analysis of the data, as well as offers opportunity for comparison with other fieldwalking studies. It is using this methodology that the following site definition thresholds have been established.

Pottery and Later Roman Activity, *c.* AD 250-410

It has long been noted that later Roman pottery is both abundant and durable, surviving repeated ploughing in a way that earlier and later fabrics cannot. While Early Saxon farmsteads may be marked by less than ten sherds of pottery, a comparable later Roman site may be demarcated by many hundreds. For this reason, a high threshold to denote settlement must be employed, here set at 80 sherds per hectare.

High density 'off-site' scatters are here defined as 35-80 sherds of pottery per hectare, reflecting, in the absence of metalwork scatters suggesting otherwise, intensive manuring. Those scatters that are of between 4 and 35 sherds per hectare are defined as of moderate density, again largely the result of moderately intense manuring. Ritual deposition of objects within ceramic vessels, as well as of pots themselves, may also contribute to the formation of such pottery scatters.[196] While it is difficult to differentiate between these activities using pottery scatters alone, the integration of metalwork into the following study enables more accurate interpretation.

Many fields produce, however, only limited quantities of pottery; such scatters, here defined as those between 0-4 sherds per hectare, have previously been seen as little more than 'a general 'background'' scatter and have, therefore, been largely overlooked.[197] Yet, small spreads of

[195] This follows the methodology set out in Jones, 'Signatures', 162.
[196] Rob Atkins and Rachel Clarke, *Excavations at Wixoe, Roman Small Town, Suffolk* (East Anglian Archaeology, 2018), 15.
[197] Williamson, 'The Roman Countryside', 228.

pottery clearly relate to human activity, despite their limited scale. It is here argued that these scatters are the result of sporadic manuring, perhaps of periodically cultivated areas of the landscape.

Ceramics, Settlement and Manuring, *c*. 410-700

Unlike both preceding and succeeding periods, Early Saxon pottery was in limited supply, poorly fired and friable, breaking up rapidly as a result of cultivation and frost.[198] Such problems are compounded by issues of recovery; handmade wares are often dark, earth coloured and fragmentary and, therefore, even the most experienced fieldwalkers may have difficulties in recovering such sherds.[199] As a result, post-Roman handmade wares constitute only a small proportion of material recovered while fieldwalking, even from fields known to have been occupied in the period.[200] These issues are exacerbated by the nature of contemporary settlement. Early Saxon settlements often consisted of sprawling agglomerations of dwellings and sheds that had relatively short lives,[201] further lowering the density of ceramic material recovered from such sites. That Early Saxon farmsteads are poorly reflected in fieldwalking datasets is corroborated by the Rendlesham case study area. Although Dog Kennel Field was the site of an atypically long-lived settlement from the fifth to eighth centuries, for example, only 24 sherds of Early Saxon pottery were recovered during the intensive field survey. As such, the threshold for defining settlement must be significantly lower than in previous centuries.

It is here suggested that 8 or more sherds of handmade post-Roman pottery per hectare likely represent a settlement. The importance of other taphonomic processes should not, however, be overlooked; such issues are particularly pertinent for the fifth to late seventh centuries, the period characterised by cremation and furnished inhumation burial. Funerary deposits, particularly large cremation cemeteries, can, once plough damaged, result in numerous sherds of pottery entering the ploughzone.[202] As demonstrated in Chapter Two, separating funerary activity from occupation in fieldwalking datasets is problematic. The integration of metalwork

[198] Schofield, 'Early Medieval Pottery Distributions', 460–62; Michael Aston and Christopher Gerrard, '"Unique, Traditional and Charming". The Shapwick Project, Somerset', *Antiquaries Journal* 79 (1999): 1–58.
[199] Foard, 'Systematic Fieldwalking', 366.
[200] The excavated settlement at Witton, Norfolk, for example, was only marked by a limited ploughzone pottery scatter. See Lawson, *Witton*, 50.
[201] See, for example, the settlement at Mucking, Essex in Hamerow, 'Settlement Mobility'.
[202] Such was the quantity of material entering the ploughzone from the cremation cemetery at Spong Hill that the site could be identified through fieldwalking even after the complete excavation of the cemetery. See Rogerson, *Fransham*, 39.

into studies of the past enables, however, greater definition of the activities represented in ploughzone assemblages.

Sherd densities of 4-8 sherds per hectare will here be considered as representing the intense manuring of fields and closes surrounding settlement sites. Such scatters may also reflect small or relatively undisturbed cremation cemeteries. Scatters of pottery of a density of 2-4 sherds per hectare are here considered as representative of manuring of a moderate intensity, although funerary activity, as well as the disposal of waste in the area surrounding settlement sites cannot be discounted as contributing to the formation of these scatters. Similarly, low density scatters are defined as those of less than 2 sherds per hectare, reflecting sporadic manuring, perhaps of outfields.

Pottery, Settlement and Manuring, *c*. 700-850.

Unlike the handmade wares of the Early Saxon period, Ipswich ware is hard-fired and, therefore, less prone to fragmentation in the plough soil; greater quantities of this pottery should, in theory at least, survive to be recovered during fieldwalking surveys. The quantity of Ipswich ware in circulation in contemporary society was, however, relatively limited, with handmade wares possibly remaining in use in conjunction with Ipswich ware to compensate for shortfalls in production at the eponymous 'wic'.[203] Such issues clearly impact the thresholds employed to categorise scatters of eighth and ninth century material; although Ipswich ware is relatively durable, the lack of this material in circulation suggests that the thresholds used to categorise contemporary pottery scatters must be suitably low.

Much archaeological attention has been focussed on high status Middle Saxon sites, such as the emporia at Ipswich, monastic and religious sites such as Brandon and North Elmham, as well as elite estate centres such as at Rendlesham. As a result, few lower status rural sites have been excavated, particularly in East Anglia, leaving little to use to calibrate the results of fieldwalking. Those that have been excavated, however, highlight that little Ipswich Ware was in circulation, further reinforcing that a low threshold must be employed to understand Middle Saxon occupation. Excavations in Grundisburgh, for example, recovered only 30 sherds of Ipswich ware along with pits and a posthole building.[204] With only an estimated 2-25% of material contained

[203] Rogerson, *Fransham*, 48.
[204] Stuart Boulter, *Excavation Report: The Old School, Grundisburgh*, Unpublished Report (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, 1994).

within subsurface deposits available for recovery by fieldwalking,[205] it is evident that the threshold for categorising high-density scatters must be suitably lowered.

It is, therefore, here suggested that scatters of 8 sherds or more per hectare reflect areas of occupation. That the Middle Saxon period witnessed the decline of cremation and furnished inhumation burials suggests that the link between Ipswich ware scatters and settlement and manuring is relatively secure.

Scatters of a high density will here be defined as those comprised of 4-8 sherds per hectare, the result of intensive manuring. Similarly, moderately dense scatters of 2-4 sherds per hectare are here viewed as representative of manuring, albeit of a lower intensity. Finally, low density scatters are here defined as those made up of fewer than 2 sherds per hectare. Such scatters likely result from sporadic manuring, perhaps of outfields.

Ceramics, Settlement and Manuring, *c*. 850-1100

The identification of settlement in the Late Saxon period in East Anglia is somewhat problematic. Although Late Saxon pottery assemblages are dominated by hard-fired wares that were widely produced and distributed, such as Thetford and St Neots ware, relatively small quantities of this material appear in the archaeological record. A deserted Late Saxon settlement in Sparham, Norfolk, for example, produced only nine sherds of Thetford ware during a fieldwalking survey.[206] If, as is often assumed, settlement sites produce the densest concentrations of pottery, then it is apparent that a low threshold to denote activities that produce comparatively high-density scatters should be employed.

Such problems are further compounded by issues of settlement stability. Although, as will be discussed below, Late Saxon and High Medieval farmsteads were liable to drift to the edges of commons and wastes in East Anglia, many currently occupied farmsteads can find their roots in this period.[207] This continuity of occupation can mask earlier activity, with scatters of pottery buried beneath non-arable land use surrounding farmsteads.

It is, therefore, here argued that 8 or more sherds of Late Saxon pottery per hectare represent settlement sites. Kitchen Field, Rendlesham, suggested above to be the site of a settlement, is marked by 8 sherds per hectare, implying that such a threshold is correct. Scatters of a high density are here defined as those of between 4 and 8 sherds per hectare, the result of the

[205] Crowther, 'Old Land Surfaces'; Gerrard, 'Misplaced Faith?', 64.
[206] Rogerson, *Fransham*, 53.
[207] Williamson, 'Settlement in North-West Essex', 125.

intensive manuring of arable fields. Scatters of 2-4 sherds per hectare are here similarly suggested to derive from manuring, albeit of a lesser intensity. Finally, it is argued that low density scatters are those comprised of less than 2 sherds per hectare, likely the result of sporadic manuring.

Pottery, Settlement and Manuring in the High Medieval Period, *c.* 1100-1350

East Anglian ploughzone assemblages of the High Middle Ages are dominated by a diverse range of well-fired, durable pottery that was in plentiful supply in contemporary society; in many ways, the ceramic signature of High Medieval England is more akin to the later Roman period than preceding centuries. Medieval pottery often constitutes a large proportion of assemblages recovered while fieldwalking; for this reason, a high threshold to categorise ceramic scatters should be employed.

Hence, it is here suggested that scatters of 80 or more sherds per hectare can be interpreted as settlement sites. These may derive from refuse disposal close to the settlement site, although the association between these middens and settlements suggest that these scatters of pottery offer a valid proxy for occupation.

Those pottery scatters of 35-80 sherds per hectare will here be considered as of moderate density. Such scatters are likely the result of intensive manuring. Spreads of pottery of 4-35 sherds per hectare will be here considered as moderate density scatters, the result of the manuring of arable lands with ceramic laden waste from the farmstead, albeit of a lower intensity. Sherd densities of 0-4 sherds per hectare are here viewed as the result of sporadic manuring.

It may be noted that these thresholds are lower than those employed elsewhere. Jones, in his work on the Whittlewood area, for example, identified scatters of High Medieval pottery ranging from 0-1255 sherds per hectare, the densest of which, those of 251-1255 sherds per hectare, were recovered from deserted medieval villages and hamlets;[208] such evidence may imply that the site definition thresholds here employed are too low. It is here that the regionality of site definition must be considered.

As will be discussed below, the countryside of Suffolk was characterised by a dispersed pattern of settlement in the High Middle Ages.[209] The data employed by Jones, however, derives from the Whittlewood area, a landscape largely dominated by villages and hamlets of varying sizes;

[208] Jones, 'Signatures', 172, 180–81.
[209] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 67.

although carrying lower populations than East Anglia, the landscape of the English Midlands was dominated by nucleated settlements rather than farmsteads flung throughout the countryside.[210]

In this light, the disparities in the quantity of ploughzone material recovered by fieldwalking are less surprising. Settlements in East Suffolk were often comprised of small numbers of farmsteads, with Playford and Brightwell marked by a total of 13 taxpayers in 1327 spread throughout both parishes.[211] Settlements surveyed by Jones were, however, considerably larger, with the deserted village of Lillingstone Dayrell carrying a population of 33 in the fourteenth century.[212] This settlement produced ploughzone sherd densities of between 141 and 1255 sherds per hectare.[213] When it is considered that settlement in the Suffolk landscape was much more dispersed, with farmsteads or small agglomerations of settlement often strung around the margins of common grazing, it appears reasonable to suggest that site definition thresholds in East Anglia should be significantly lower than in the Midlands, perhaps by as much as a third.

The impact of such issues upon manuring must also be considered. The Suffolk countryside was, in the High Medieval period, dominated by irregular open fields and land held in severalty.[214] Unlike the regular open fields of the English Midlands, the holdings of individual farmers were clustered in particular areas of the parish, rather than spread evenly throughout two or three fields. While many key farming activities still took place communally, land, particularly that close to farmsteads, was more likely to be manured by individual families and was, therefore, liable to receive a lesser quantity of manure, and consequently, pottery, than those in the Midlands. As Jones notes, land held in severalty such as assarts can be identified by the low quantities of pottery recovered, having been spread with the waste produced by only one family.[215] It is reasonable to suggest, therefore, that similar patterns may be apparent in the irregular open fields and enclosures held in severalty of High Medieval Suffolk; with fields manured by individual families, less ceramic material entered the plough soil and, therefore, lower densities of pottery are recovered by fieldwalking surveys. Hence, while Jones argued that 120 sherds of pottery per hectare may represent the intense communal manuring of open fields,[216] much

[210] Richard Jones and Mark Page, *Medieval Villages in an English Landscape* (Windgather Press, 2006).
[211] Sydenham Henry Augustus Hervey, *Suffolk in 1327 Being a Subsidy Return* (George Booth, 1906), 119.
[212] Jones, 'Signatures', 170.
[213] Jones, 'Signatures', 172.
[214] Tom Williamson, *Shaping Medieval Landscapes: Settlement, Society, Environment* (Windgather Press, 2004), 5.
[215] Jones, 'Signatures', 185.
[216] Jones, 'Signatures', 180–81.

lower sherd densities in East Anglia may represent manuring of the same frequency, if not the same intensity and with the same quantity of manure.

Period	Settlement (sherds per hectare)	Intense Manuring (sherds per hectare)	Moderately Intense Manuring (sherds per hectare)	Sporadic Manuring (sherds per hectare)
c. 250-410	80+	35-80	4-35	0-4
c. 410-700	8+	4-8	2-4	0-2
c. 700-850	8+	4-8	2-4	0-2
c. 850-1100	8+	4-8	2-4	0-2
c. 1100-1350	80+	35-80	4-35	0-4

Table 3.3: the ceramic site definition thresholds used throughout.

Methods – Site Definition using Metalwork

It was suggested in Chapter Two that pottery, owing to its widespread distribution within sites at all levels of the social scale, offers a baseline from which understanding of the landscape can begin. As attested in the above case study, the distribution of metalwork displays, however, a much greater degree of variability. While the later Roman settlement site on Kitchen Piece and the possible shrine on Hut Field were marked by similar spreads of pottery, for example, there were vast differences in the metalwork signature recovered from each of the sites; such variations derive from both differences in the wealth circulating on each site, as well as differing activities represented in the dataset. Similarly, while scatters of High Medieval pottery demarcate both the settlement site surrounding Rendlesham Green and the manorial site of Naunton Hall, only the Naunton Hall site is represented in the metalwork dataset in any significant way.

Such examples are reflective of a wider pattern; the quantity of metalwork recovered from individual sites varies greatly depending on the wealth of the settlement from which it was derived, as well as the historic processes that resulted in its deposition. Such notions suggest that metalwork scatters cannot be categorised in the same way as ceramic scatters. Instead, pottery scatters must be used to provide the baseline of activity that occurred in the landscape, while spreads of metalwork enable site chronologies and patterns of social differentiation to be refined.

In this, the value of taking a 'blended approach' to ploughzone archaeology is apparent. While pottery scatters provide insight into the basic structure of settlement and cultivation in the past, metalwork scatters enable this picture to be refined. It is this methodology that will be used here. Scatters of pottery recovered by Newman will be categorised to understand the patterns of occupation and arable farming in the past, while spreads of metalwork recorded via the PAS will be used to further identify the past activities that took place on any given site, as well as to differentiate the wealth and status of individual settlements. Before this is possible, however, the study area must be introduced and current understanding of the East Anglian landscape set out.

Chapter Four: The Study Area: Landscape and Historiographical Approaches

The Study Area

This thesis focusses on the development of the landscape in 37 parishes in East Suffolk from *c.* AD 250-1350 using evidence from the plough soil (Figure 4.1).[217] Although the present study takes a fine-grained approach, this thesis interrogates the development of settlement and agriculture at a landscape scale. While, to some degree, the selection of a study area is somewhat arbitrary, the area chosen provides high-quality systematic fieldwalking data combined with a long history of recorded metal detecting that can be employed to provide important insight into the landscape.

The relevance of this geographically limited area to the study of the landscape more widely can, of course, be questioned, particularly when confronted with recent studies that interrogate large areas of the countryside.[218] The benefits of such local research have, however, been espoused,[219] and studies such as the Whittlewood Project have contributed much to understanding of the countryside.[220] Although undertaken in a relatively small study area, such an approach enables fine-grained analysis of the rural settlement pattern and landscape of East Suffolk.

While the value of this spatially limited study can be challenged, no single study area can be taken to be representative of the many countrysides of England. The 37 parishes here interrogated are, however, environmentally and topographically diverse, encompassing a variety of landscapes, as will be discussed below. Such variety enables the study area to both provide insight into the impact of the environment on the development of the landscape, as

[217] These parishes are spread across the hundreds of Carlford, Colneis, Loose, Parham and Wilford. Due to the focus of the present thesis on ploughzone datasets, as well as the lack of space, issues such as church foundation and the territorial landscape cannot be discussed here. These issues are, however, dealt with elsewhere by the present author.
[218] Tom Williamson et al., *Champion: The Making and Unmaking of the English Midland Landscape* (University of Exeter Press, 2013).
[219] N. J. Higham, 'The Landscape Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England: An Introduction', in *The Landscape Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. N. J. Higham and Martin J. Ryan (Boydell Press, 2010), 12.
[220] Jones and Page, *Medieval Villages*.

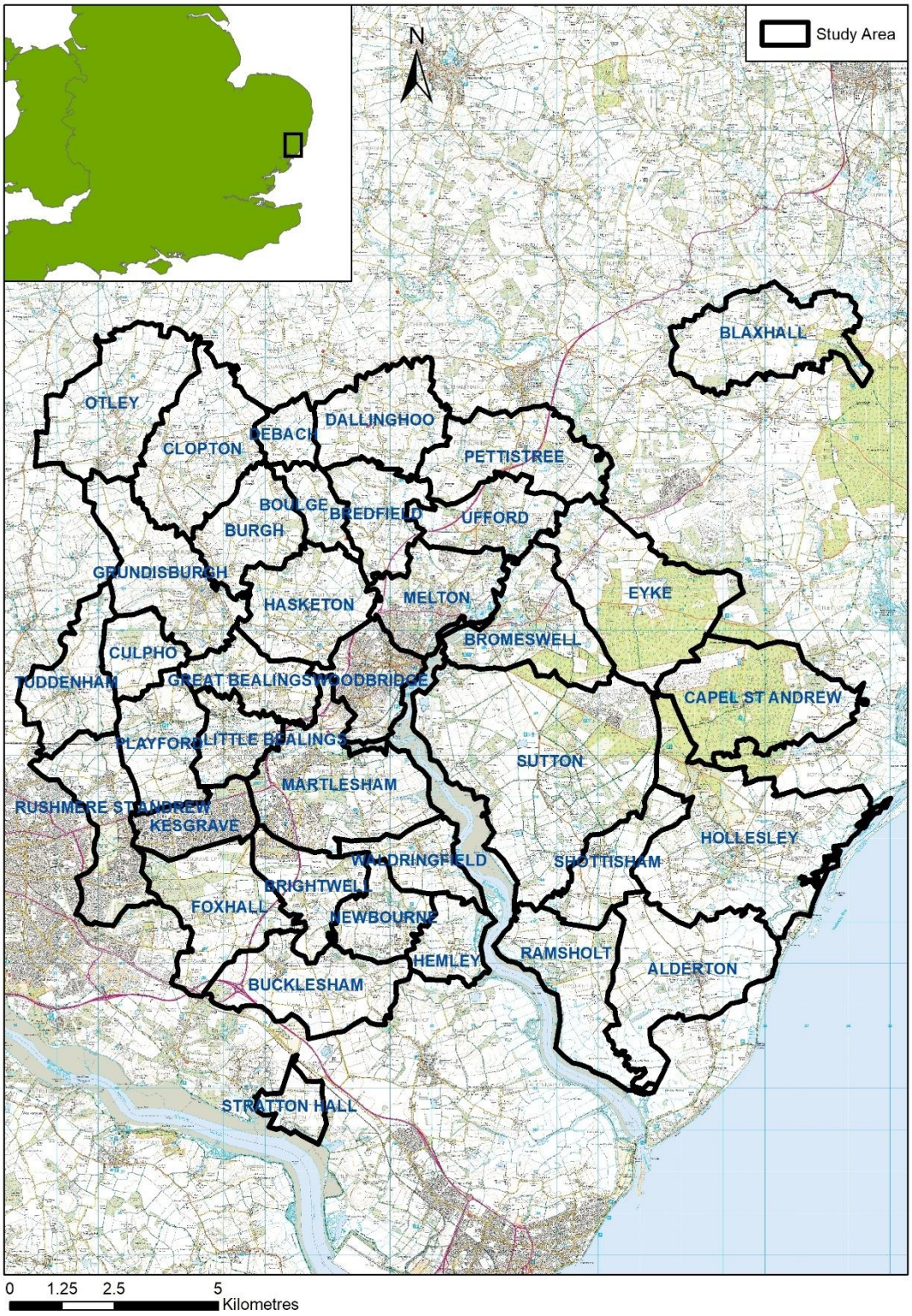

Figure 4.1: The location of the parishes fieldwalked by Newman in Suffolk. Parish boundary data used throughout from M. Satchell, P. Kitson, G. Newton, L. Shaw-Taylor, L. and E Wrigley, *1851 England and Wales Census Parishes, Townships and Places,* 10.5255/UKDA-SN-852232

well as suggesting that the conclusions drawn from this study may prove relevant to East Anglia more widely and, perhaps, England as a whole.

The Landscape and Environment of the Study Area

As noted above, the study area is environmentally diverse, stretching from the marshes and beaches of the Suffolk coast, through the Suffolk Sandlings, itself a diverse landscape, to the clay-covered uplands of High Suffolk. These countrysides have been variously categorised; indeed, the anonymous author of the early-seventeenth-century *Chorography of Suffolk* divided East Suffolk into two broad zones: the wooded, fertile landscape of High Suffolk, and the coastal strip, dominated by acid sand, 'fitte only for sheep and conyes'.[221] This area was later described by John Kirby as the 'Sandlands',[222] known today as the Suffolk Sandlings.

Much of this diversity was driven by the soils of the study area; indeed, Arthur Young, discussing Suffolk, suggested that 'there is not, perhaps, a county in the kingdom which contains a greater diversity of soil' (Figures 4.2 and 4.3).[223] The Suffolk Sandlings are largely characterised by acid sands of the Newport Association, interspersed with more fertile loams and alluvial soils, while High Suffolk is dominated by a complex mix of fertile, but often waterlogged, clays, such as those of the Beccles, Hanslope and Ragdale Associations. Although much of the discussion throughout the following chapters will be based upon a binary division of these soil types, such categorisation represents, to some extent, an oversimplification of the complexities of the countryside. While it is undoubtedly true that the contrasting soils of the Sandlings and claylands have driven the development of subtly different landscapes, such overarching categorisation negates the complexities of the natural environment.

The Sandlings, for example, are often discussed in terms of the thin, infertile acid sands which dominate the area.[224] While these soils have contributed much to shaping the countryside from prehistory to the present day, such discussion homogenises what is, in reality, a complex and dynamic landscape, formed of many intertwined soil types and environments. Although the parish of Brightwell, for instance, is indeed dominated by acidic infertile soils, significant areas of the loamy soils of the Wick Association also occur; simply discussing the landscape of this parish in terms of the acid sands of the Newport Association clearly overlooks some of the nuances of the environment. Indeed, the Newport Association itself comprises varied soils, such

[221] Diarmaid MacCulloch and Anonymous, eds, *The Chorography of Suffolk* (Suffolk Record Society, 1976), 20.
[222] John Kirby, *John Kirby's Suffolk: His Maps and Roadbooks*, ed. David Dymond (Boydell, 2004), 1.
[223] Arthur Young, *A General View of the Agriculture of the County of Suffolk* (B. MacMillan, 1797), 2.
[224] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 1-9.

as Newport 2 and 4, each with inherently different characteristics. While Newport 2 soils are loamy and were, to some extent, favoured for early settlement, the soils of the Newport 4 Association are some of the most infertile in the district.

Similarly, while High Suffolk is dominated by heavy, fertile soils that are prone to waterlogging, areas of lighter soil, such as those of the Burlingham Association, can be found throughout the countryside. Indeed, the interaction between soils and topography adds further complexity to such discussions. While the Beccles clays of parishes such as Clopton are indeed poorly draining, those on the slopes of valleys prove less so; in essence, topography shapes and nuances the properties and relative value of soils in the region. The landscape of East Suffolk, and England as a whole, is an intricate mosaic of interwoven soils and environments that evades attempts at easy categorisation.[225] As Warner has noted, 'variability is the hallmark of the clayland soils of East Suffolk';[226] such notions should also be extended to the Suffolk Sandlings.

Although it is dangerous to categorise the landscape based on soil type, similar soils did, however, drive the development of analogous landscapes; employing this categorisation enables the impact of the environment on the development of settlement and agriculture to be understood. While the environment, and the landscapes that it shapes, are inherently complex, employing general divisions based upon dominant soil types allows some of this complexity to be unpicked.

The Suffolk Sandlings

The Suffolk Sandlings comprises some two thirds of the study area,[227] although the boundaries of the region are poorly defined (Figure 4.4).[228] As noted above, the area is characterised, and indeed shaped by, relatively infertile 'blowing sands',[229] such as those of the Newport Association, largely overlying porous crag deposits, although other, more fertile soils can also be found in the district. The floors of the valleys are comprised of a complex mix of peat or alluvial

[225] For further analysis of the environment of East Suffolk, see Peter Warner, *The Origins of Suffolk* (Manchester University Press, 1996), 9–19.
[226] Peter Warner, *Greens, Commons and Clayland Colonization: The Origins and Development of Green-Side Settlement in East Suffolk* (Leicester University Press, 1987), 5.
[227] That is, two thirds of the total survey area is dominated by sandy soils. Approximately 2,611 hectares (53%) of arable land was surveyed by Newman in areas of light soils.
[228] Compare, for example, Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 2; Warner, *Origins*, 11; Tom Williamson, *Sandlands: The Suffolk Coast and Heaths*, Landscapes of Britain (Windgather Press, 2005), xii. The Suffolk Sandlings are here taken as all areas of light soils lying on the coastal plain in East Suffolk.
[229] Young, *The Agriculture of Suffolk*, 5.

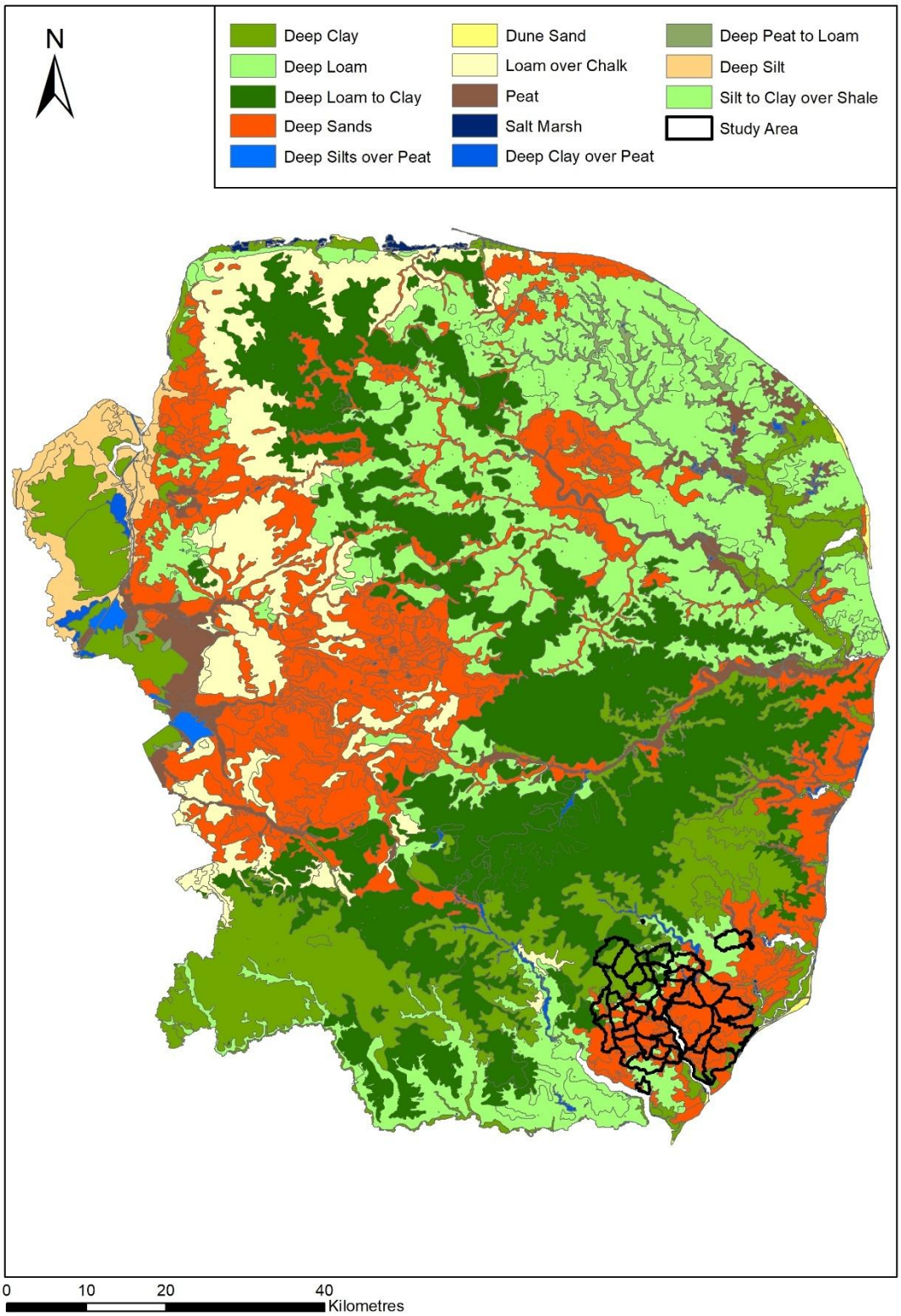

Figure 4.2: The dominant soils of East Anglia. This key will be used throughout. The sands of East Anglia, such as those in Breckland and the Sandlings, are tractable yet thin and relatively infertile, while the arc of clay running through the centre of the region is more fertile but difficult to work, particularly when waterlogged. The loams that that border these soils, such as those in the Isle of Flegg, are some of the most agriculturally productive in the region. Soils data from Cranfield University LandIS.

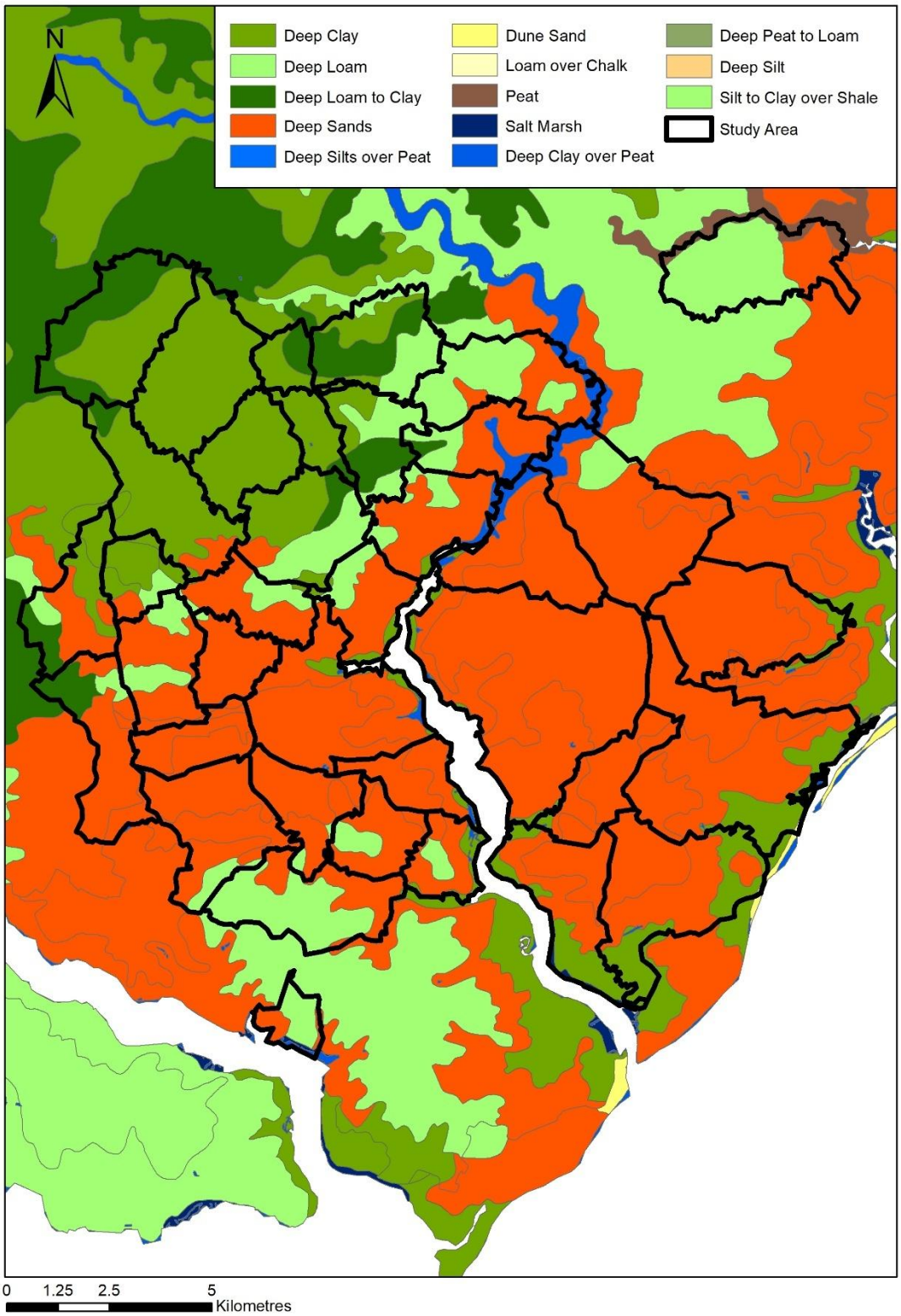

Figure 4.3: the dominant soils of the study area. The sands of the study area, largely comprised of soils of the Newport Association, are tractable yet thin and relatively infertile, while the clays lying to the north and west of the study area are more fertile but difficult to work, particularly when waterlogged.

soils, such as those of the Wallasey and Midelney Associations. In the past, as often today, such soils carried areas of riverine marsh and meadow.

The Sandlings is a landscape of heaths, coastal and riverine marshes and, more recently, Forestry Commission plantations (Figure 4.5). Areas of arable farming can also be found in the region, with many of the more fertile soils, in the mid-twentieth century as today, under the plough, punctuated by areas of heath, woodland and grassland.[230] Although the topography of the Sandlings is less marked than other areas of Suffolk, this is a gently rolling countryside, a 'subtle' landscape in which much of the land lies beneath 60m above sea level.[231] The landscape is dominated by the many rivers and estuaries that dissect the countryside, such as the Alde, Deben and Fynn, as well as smaller rivers such as the Butley River and Martlesham Creek. Many streams also cross the landscape, such as the Tang and Black Ditch. It is in the valleys of these rivers and streams that the most fertile soils in the district, as well as reliable sources of water, can be found (Figure 4.6).

The Suffolk Sandlings was, at the time of Domesday, poorly wooded and less well populated than neighbouring areas, with numerous small settlements scattered throughout the landscape, many of which have since shrunken or been deserted.[232] Although the modern settlement pattern and landscape retains some of its medieval character, the countryside has been deeply impacted by post-medieval remodelling, with large-scale heathland reclamation and Forestry Commission plantations shaping the landscape, while landed estates such as those at Benhall and Sudbourne have significantly altered the countryside.[233] The Sandlings carries a somewhat mixed settlement pattern, with dispersed farmsteads flung throughout the landscape, punctuated by larger agglomerations of settlement, including villages, although the impact of post-medieval infilling on this settlement pattern must be noted.[234] Churches stand scattered throughout the countryside, often located within agglomerations of settlement as at Alderton but also occasionally isolated, such as at Ramsholt. Like the landscape of Suffolk more widely, this is a varied countryside, a complex landscape woven from threads of continuity and change laid down over many centuries.

[230] Dudley Stamp, *The Land of Britain Its Use and Misuse* (Longmans, Green and Co., 1948), 85.
[231] Warner, *Origins*, 9.
[232] H. C. Darby, *The Domesday Geography of Eastern England* (Cambridge University Press, 1972), 156–64.
[233] Williamson, *Sandlands*, 19–23.
[234] For further analysis of the landscape of the Suffolk Sandlings, see Williamson, *Sandlands*, 1–9.

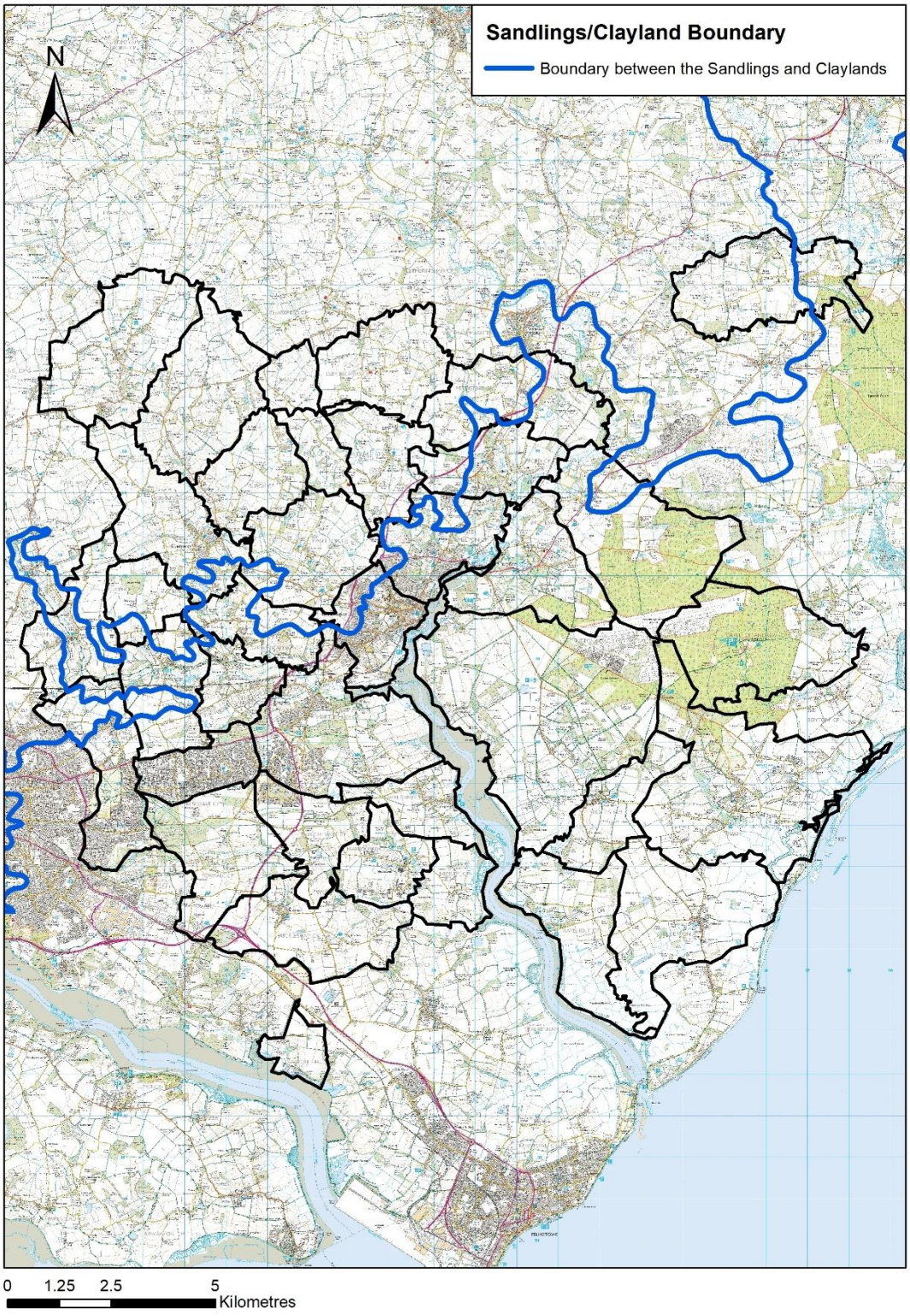

Figure 4.4: the boundary between the Sandlings and claylands, based on the boundary between the sand and clay soils of the area. The claylands lay to the north of the boundary.

Figure 4.5: Sutton Heath. Although more treed than in the Middle Ages owing to the decline of grazing, the open, somewhat desolate landscape of these upland heaths still resembles that grazed by vast flocks of sheep in earlier centuries.

Figure 4.6: the river Fynn in Great Bealings. Rivers such as this dissect the landscape of the Sandlings, alongside which expanses of meadow and grassland can be found.

The Claylands of High Suffolk

While much of the study area encompasses soils formed of acid sand, approximately a third of the area here interrogated is characterised by fertile loams and clay soils (Figure 4.4).[235] Such soils have shaped the landscape in innumerable ways. Although more fertile than those in the Sandlings, there are issues with cultivating these soils, particularly resulting from waterlogging and the drying of clays into hard, brick-like masses during dry weather. There is, however, much diversity in the landscape of the claylands, described by Warner as 'a mosaic of variable soils',[236] with areas of richly fertile, tractable loams scattered throughout the district, clustering, in particular, on the free draining slopes of river valleys and at the intersection between the Sandlings and claylands.

The landscape is dissected by numerous rivers, such as the Alde, Ore and Deben, along with smaller streams such as the Frome. It is from these rivers and streams, as well as from widely scattered underground aquifers, that water can reliably be accessed. The slopes of these river valleys are often characterised by well drained, and therefore, agriculturally viable, soils. The uplands, in contrast, are dominated by level, often waterlogged, clays that proved relatively unattractive to early farmers until the advent of improved ploughing technology. While the valley sides and uplands are typified by loamy and clay soils, the valley floors are characterised by alluvial and occasionally peat soils; much as in the Sandlings, such soils carry rich pastures and meadows.

High Suffolk is a bosky countryside, divided by numerous, species rich hedgerows, interspersed with more dense stands of trees (Figures 4.7 and 4.8). The topography is again muted and gently rolling, with the upland 'wolds' and valley floors located in relatively close proximity. Before the explosion of cultivation in the post-conquest period, much of the uplands remained as poorly drained wood pasture, punctuated by more densely treed areas, while the valley sides were intensively cultivated. Indeed, the landscape was well wooded at the time of Domesday, albeit less so than the northwest of the county.[237] By the mid-twentieth century, however, much of the claylands were under the plough, interspersed with areas of grazing and stands of woodland.[238]

[235] That is, a third of the survey parishes are located in areas of heavy clay soil. Approximately 2360 hectares (47%) of arable land surveyed by Newman was in the claylands.
[236] Warner, *Clayland Colonization*, 5.
[237] Darby, *Domesday Geography*, 182.
[238] Stamp, *Land of Britain*, 85.

The settlement pattern of High Suffolk is largely dispersed, with farmsteads scattered throughout the landscape or strung around the margins of commons and greens, although many of these areas of rough pasture were enclosed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. While many farmsteads stand alone or in small nucleations, post-medieval infilling has again resulted in infrequent agglomerations of settlement. Parish churches are often isolated amongst the fields, occasionally accompanied by a single farmstead or rectory. The countryside of High Suffolk was less impacted by post-medieval remodelling than the Sandlings, remaining connected with the medieval past. As in the Sandlings, the claylands are a varied landscape, shaped by the forces of the environment.

Conclusion

The study area encompasses a range of landscapes, from the heath covered Sandlings to the wooded, bosky claylands of High Suffolk; the development of each of these countrysides has been influenced by the environment in innumerable ways. A variety of settlement forms are also apparent in the area here explored, ranging from larger agglomerations of settlement to the common edge and isolated farmsteads characteristic of the East Anglian claylands.

The landscape of East Suffolk is an 'old country',[239] a countryside of dispersed settlement and wooded claylands, of 'lonely heaths … and grazing marshes' in the Sandlings.[240] Although, as suggested above, it may be questioned whether such a spatially limited study can offer insight into the landscape of East Anglia, and indeed England more widely, studying such an environmentally diverse countryside can provide valuable understanding of the development of the landscape.

[239] Warner, *Clayland Colonization*, 44.
[240] Williamson, *Sandlands*, 1.

Figure 4.7: the bosky claylands in Clopton. In such landscapes, woodland, and the varied resources it provided, was prevalent.

Figure 4.8: the level uplands of the claylands in Burgh. This lack of relief, combined with the heavy clay soils, renders the cultivation of such landscapes difficult without the use of heavy ploughing technology.

The East Anglian Landscape: Historiography

Although key sites in the study area, such as Sutton Hoo, have been extensively debated, [241] the wider landscape of East Suffolk has been the subject of little academic attention in recent years. Instead, historic settlement and agriculture in the study area have largely been interpreted only in the context of wider East Anglian trends, a pattern that largely overlooks the subregional nuances of the countryside. Here, the traditional narrative of the development of the East Anglian landscape will be laid out, before the methodology established in Chapter Two is applied in the following chapters to the study area to further understanding of settlement and agriculture in East Suffolk, and East Anglia more widely.

[241] See, for example, Tom Williamson, *Sutton Hoo and Its Landscape: The Contexts of Monuments* (Oxbow Books, 2008).

The Later Roman Countryside of East Anglia, *c.* AD 250-410

The later Roman landscape of East Anglia has been poorly served in academic tradition, particularly compared to later centuries,[242] the result, in part, of the relative lack of large Roman sites in the region, with few villas, large towns and military sites found in East Anglia.[243] Much of current understanding of later Roman East Anglia is, at a landscape scale, derived from the results of fieldwalking, with debate surrounding the settlement patterns and agricultural systems of the region, in particular, based upon pottery scatters. The adoption of metal detecting data has, however, been much slower.

It is widely accepted that the later Roman landscape was open and exploited, a view reinforced by numerous fieldwalking surveys throughout the region.[244] The countryside of later Roman East Anglia was 'prosperous, populated' and 'filled up with farms and villages' scattered throughout the landscape at a density of approximately 1 settlement per km^2.[245] While, in areas characterised by acidic, sandy soils, these settlements were largely riverine, later Roman clayland occupation sites were also thinly scattered along the interfluves, although these sites were, for apparently unclear reasons, minor compared to their valley-side counterparts.[246]

This landscape of single farmsteads and small hamlets was punctuated by larger agglomerations of settlement, including villages and small towns such as that at Hacheston, as well as regionally significant sites such as *Venta Icenorum*, the administrative capital of the territory that covered much of East Anglia.[247] These towns formed a relatively dense network of economic, cultural and religious centres scattered throughout the landscape, connected by a web of roads and tracks. Although the nature of these sites is beyond the scope of the present study, the impact of these small towns on the rural landscape should not be understated, particularly as market centres and consumers of agricultural produce.

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[242] The most comprehensive studies of the landscape of Roman East Anglia remain Ivan E. Moore et al., *The Archaeology of Roman Suffolk* (Suffolk County Council Planning Department, 1988); Tom Williamson, *The Origins of Norfolk* (Manchester University Press, 1993), 20–48; John A. Davies, *The Land of Boudica: Prehistoric and Roman Norfolk* (Heritage, 2008).
[243] D. J. Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession: Britain in the Roman Empire, 54 BC - AD 409* (Penguin Books, 2007), 384.
[244] Davison, *South-East Norfolk*, 15–16; Rogerson et al., *Barton Bendish and Caldecote*, 14; Williamson, 'Settlement in North-West Essex', 124–25. The form of these settlements in East Anglia is poorly understood, owing to the reliance upon ceramic scatters to understand settlement patterns.
[245] Warner, *Origins*, 43.For varying settlement densities, see Davison, *South-East Norfolk*, 15–16; Newman, 'Late Roman', 29–30; Williamson, 'The Roman Countryside', 124–25.
[246] Rogerson et al., *Barton Bendish and Caldecote*, 14.
[247] Davies, *The Land of Boudica*.

These dispersed rural settlements were situated within an open and exploited countryside, 'surrounded by well tilled fields'.[248] It has been demonstrated that as little as 15% of all later Roman pollen samples in East Anglia derive from trees, suggesting that the countryside was cleared and cultivated, although the samples upon which such notions are founded are poorly distributed throughout the region.[249] Much of this land clearance was inherited from previous centuries, with large later Iron Age and early Roman field systems identified throughout East Anglia, suggesting that the landscape, including the interfluves, was cleared and exploited at an early date.[250] Some of these early field systems were co-axial in form, although the chronology of these fields in East Anglia has been much debated.[251] In this cleared landscape, much of the clay-covered interfluves were employed as grazing, perhaps a landscape of wood pasture, punctuated by denser stands of woodland, although pockets of cultivation sat amongst this pastoral landscape. The sandy uplands of areas such as Breckland were, on the other hand, characterised by heaths, with apparently little cultivation of the infertile plateaux.[252]

The nature of agriculture in later Roman East Anglia remains, however, relatively poorly understood, with discussion focussing on the social and economic significance of farming, rather than the practicalities of the agrarian countryside.[253] Where the agricultural landscape has been discussed, such debates have leaned heavily on the results of fieldwalking, with ceramic 'manuring scatters' widely employed to understand the arable landscape.[254]

It is largely accepted that the majority of later Roman cultivation took place in the fertile countryside of river valleys, particularly in the Sandlings and Breckland; it is here that the most agriculturally viable soils can be found.[255] In the claylands, however, scatters of pottery recovered from the interfluves suggest that cultivation also expanded onto the uplands,

[248] Warner, *Origins*, 43.
[249] Rippon et al., *Fields of Britannia*, 170.
[250] Rippon et al., *Fields of Britannia*, 179.
[251] Tom Williamson, 'The Ancient Origins of Medieval Fields: A Reassessment', *Archaeological Journal* 173 (2016): 264–87.
[252] Newman, 'Deben Valley', 481.
[253] Lisa Lodwick, 'The Precursor to the Revolution?: Current Understandings of the Agrarian Economy of Roman Britain', in *New Perspectives on the Medieval 'Agricultural Revolution': Crop, Stock and Furrow*, ed. Mark McKerracher and Helena Hamerow (Liverpool University Press, 2022). For an example of such work, see Jeremy Taylor, 'Encountering Romanitas: Characterising the Role of Agricultural Communities in Roman Britain', *Britannia* 44 (2013): 171–90. Little attempt at synthesis has been made, with the exception of Peter Fowler, *Farming in the First Millennium AD: British Agriculture Between Julius Caesar and William the Conqueror* (Cambridge University Press, 2002); Lodwick, 'Precursor to the Revolution?'; Kate Parks, 'Iron Age and Roman Arable Practice in the East of England' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Leicester, 2013); Martyn Allen et al., *The Rural Economy of Roman Britain* (The Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, 2017).
[254] Williamson, 'The Roman Countryside'; Davison, *South-East Norfolk*.
[255] Newman, 'Deben Valley', 481.

facilitated by heavy ploughing technology.[256] An infield-outfield system was likely operated in the later Roman centuries, with a core arable area cultivated annually while areas of more marginal soil were occasionally brought under the plough.[257] Such suggestions are based on ceramic 'halos' identified surrounding settlement during fieldwalking surveys, interpreted as the result of the intensive cultivation and manuring of annually cultivated fields that punctuated a landscape of sporadic cultivation.[258]

Although little discussed in the context of rural farmsteads,[259] these settlements were also engaged in a significant degree of livestock production, evidenced by the droveways often associated with later Roman settlements. [260] It has been suggested that the upland wolds were employed as grazing for livestock, while riverine meadows were exploited for hay and fodder.[261] Later Roman livestock husbandry has, however, been relatively poorly explored, particularly in East Anglia.

Although the above discussion of later Roman East Anglia is largely accepted, there are key issues that remain unresolved. While the transformation of the landscape in the post-Roman centuries has been widely debated, the traditional view of later Roman East Anglia is rather static and unchanging at a landscape scale.[262] Such a pattern, in part, derives from the use of poorly dated pottery, particularly locally produced greywares, to understand change in the countryside;[263] the precise patterns of settlement and landscape change in later Roman East Anglia remain to be refined. Much of current understanding of later Roman East Anglia has also treated the region as a homogenous whole, with little discussion of subregional variation in the countryside. Those few studies that have acknowledged some degree of regionality have focussed solely on the tribal and ethnic origins of such patterns, rather than offering a more

[256] Roman ploughing technology, is however, debated. See Fowler, *Farming in the First Millennium*, 182–204; Parks, 'Iron Age and Roman Arable Practice', 40–41.
[257] Rogerson, *Fransham*, 33. Such suggestions have, however, proved controversial. See Fowler, *Farming in the First Millennium*, 216–17.
[258] Williamson, 'The Roman Countryside', 228.
[259] Discussion of Roman livestock husbandry often focusses on urban centres and villa estates. See Mark Maltby, 'The Exploitation of Animals in Roman Britain', in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Britain*, ed. Martin Millett et al. (Oxford University Press, 2016).
[260] Alexander Smith, 'The East', in *The Rural Settlement of Roman Britain*, ed. Alexander Smith et al. (Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, 2016), 232–34.
[261] Fowler, *Farming in the First Millennium*, 222–39; Rippon et al., *Fields of Britannia*, 194–95.
[262] Taylor, for example, offers no insight into patterns of settlement change, while Warner has suggested that the agricultural systems of Roman Suffolk were inherited wholesale from the Iron Age. See Jeremy Taylor, *An Atlas of Roman Rural Settlement in England* (Council for British Archaeology, 2007), 49–50; Warner, *Origins*, 53.
[263] Both Davison and Newman offer little interpretation of Roman settlement change. See Davison, *South-East Norfolk*, 15–16; Newman, 'Deben Valley', 481.

nuanced interrogation of subregional variation. The subtle subregional variations evident in the later Roman countryside will be discussed below.

The Early Anglo-Saxon Landscape of East Anglia *c.* 410-700

The transformation of the later Roman countryside into one that was apparently 'Anglo-Saxon' in character has been the subject of intense debate;[264] indeed, the earliest centuries of the post-Roman period are especially prominent in the historiography of East Anglia, owing to the wealth of contemporary sites in the region. Cemeteries such as those at Sutton Hoo and Snape, royal centres such as at Rendlesham and Coddenham and the early town at Ipswich have come to dominate understanding of the Early Saxon East Anglian landscape, leading, to some extent, to the rural settlement patterns and agricultural systems of the lower classes being overlooked.[265]

Traditionally, it was suggested that the end of Roman Britain was marked by violence, bloodshed and discontinuity, with the cleared and settled landscape lost in 'weeds, scrub and ruin'.[266] More recently, however, a more subtle view of the fifth century has been presented, with many arguing for much continuity, particularly in the countryside.[267] Proponents of this viewpoint suggest that overtly Anglo-Saxon settlement forms and material culture emerged as a result of acculturation, with a limited number of migrants bringing a cultural package that was adopted by the surviving Romano-British population. As James Gerrard has suggested, the 'incoming Germanic elite offered an ideology and an identity which the rudderless inhabitants of Britain seized upon'.[268] In this model, continuity of population, if not of settlement forms and location, are implied, although the precise chronology of this change remains unclear, in part due to the reliance of academics upon poorly dated fieldwalking datasets.

A greater degree of continuity in the rural landscape has, however, been proposed, with some suggesting that elements of the agrarian countryside, such as field systems, remained in use throughout the period of political transition.[269] Despite the long history of debate, little consensus has been reached. While many now favour the notion of acculturation and relative

[264] Neil Faulkner, *The Decline and Fall of Roman Britain* (Tempus, 2001); A. S. Esmonde Cleary, *The Ending of Roman Britain* (Routledge, 1991).
[265] The work of Martin Carver entirely overlooks more typical settlements, for example. See Martin Carver, *Sutton Hoo: A Seventh-Century Princely Burial Ground and Its Context* (British Museum Press, 2005).
[266] W.G. Hoskins, *The Making of the English Landscape* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1954), 44.
[267] Susan Oosthuizen, *The Emergence of the English* (Arc Humanities Press, 2019); Richard Hodges, *The Anglo-Saxon Achievement: Archaeology and the Beginnings of English Society* (Duckworth, 1989).
[268] James Gerrard, *The Ruin of Roman Britain: An Archaeological Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 5.
[269] Rippon et al., *Fields of Britannia*.

continuity within the East Anglian countryside, a sizeable minority continue to argue for widespread discontinuity, with some going as far as to suggest that the fifth century witnessed the 'total collapse of the Romanised way of life'.[270]

Although some form of continuity is largely accepted, it is apparent that far reaching changes occurred in the countryside of East Anglia during the fifth century. Perhaps most importantly, the relatively stable later Roman settlement pattern of dispersed farmsteads, hamlets and small towns was replaced by transient, wandering settlements, gently drifting throughout the countryside as dwellings were reshaped and rebuilt.[271] These occupation sites, consisting of earth-fast timber halls and *grubenhäuser*, were frequently rebuilt on a different footprint, resulting in settlements gently drifting throughout the landscape; such patterns have been linked to social considerations, as well as agrarian practicalities.[272] These settlement forms have been widely identified, such as at Mucking, Essex, while East Anglian examples such as the settlement at West Stow are well known.[273]

The frequent rebuilding of dwellings presents significant issues for understanding the density of settlement through fieldwalking surveys. As suggested above, Early Saxon pottery is inherently friable and is, therefore, relatively rare and poorly datable. Due to this, identifying those settlements that were occupied coterminously is problematic, suggesting that current estimates of settlement density may be incorrect.[274] Indeed, the wandering tendencies of Early Saxon settlements can result in the formation of extensive, yet diffuse, scatters of pottery. While such material may appear to reflect a large area of settlement, it is, in reality, representative of a small number of farmsteads drifting throughout the landscape over long periods.

These farmsteads were often associated with inhumation, cremation or mixed rite cemeteries. Such cemeteries remained fixed in the landscape surrounding occupation sites while their attendant settlements meandered through the countryside. Although this relationship between settlement and cemeteries has been viewed as somewhat ubiquitous,[275] important exceptions

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[270] Esmonde Cleary, *Ending of Roman Britain*, 161.
[271] Helena Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford University Press, 2012).
[272] Hamerow, *Rural Settlements*, 33–35; Mark McKerracher, *Farming Transformed in Anglo-Saxon England: Agriculture in the Long Eighth Century* (Windgather Press, 2018), 34–35.
[273] *Excavations at Mucking - Volume 2: The Anglo-Saxon Settlement* (English Heritage Archaeological Monographs, 1993), 86–93; West, *West Stow, Vol 1*.
[274] John Hines, 'The Anglo-Saxon Settlement at Catholme, Staffordshire: A Re-Assessment of the Chronological Evidence and Possible Re-Interpretation', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 21 (2018): 47–59.
[275] Including by the present author in Tom Cox, 'Reassessing the Relationship Between Early Saxon Activity and Parish Boundaries', *Landscapes* 23 (2023): 123–39.

remain, such as the burial grounds at Tranmer House as well as the extensive cemetery at Spong Hill which served a large, widely dispersed population.[276] On the whole, however, a close association between settlements and cemeteries in the Early Saxon period is evident, with cemeteries located near, but distinct from, settlement sites.[277]

The association between Early Saxon farmsteads and antecedent settlements has been much discussed. It has been widely suggested that the landscape of East Anglia was subject to wholesale settlement change in the fifth century, a view largely based on the results of fieldwalking surveys.[278] Indeed, Helena Hamerow has argued that only a minority of Roman sites were occupied by Early Saxon farmsteads, with overt evidence of continued occupation even rarer.[279] Others, however, have drawn attention to patterns of settlement continuity, albeit in areas beyond East Anglia.[280] Little consensus has been reached; while some have suggested that the East Anglian landscape was subject to 'desertion and discontinuity',[281] others have argued for a much greater degree of congruence between the Roman and Early Saxon settlement patterns.

It is, however, largely accepted that the Early Saxon settlement pattern was 'thinner' than that of previous centuries, perhaps the result of demographic decline.[282] This collapse in the density of settlement is inherently intertwined with the 'retreat from the claylands', that is, the abandonment of areas of heavy soil as a focus of settlement and arable farming.[283] Such suggestions have proved pervasive, with many arguing that Early Saxon occupation retrenched to areas of light soil, such as the Suffolk Sandlings and Breckland, due to 'post-Roman technical regression' and the loss of the heavy ploughing technology required to cultivate these clay soils.[284]

This desire for light soils engendered an intensely riverine settlement pattern, with dwellings clustered around rivers and streams, in the valleys of which light, moderately fertile soils could

[276] Helena Hamerow, 'Communities of the Living and the Dead: The Relationship Between Anglo-Saxon Settlements and Cemeteries, c. AD 450-850', in *Intersections: The Archaeology and History of Christianity in England, 400-1200 Papers in Honour of Martin Biddle and Birthe Kjølbye-Biddle*, ed. Martin Henig and Nigel Ramsay (Archaeopress, 2010).
[277] Chester-Kadwell, *Early Anglo-Saxon Communities*, 20–24.
[278] Davison, *South-East Norfolk*, 16; Rogerson, *Fransham*, 43–45.
[279] Hamerow, *Rural Settlements*, 144.
[280] Stephen Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village: The Diversification of Landscape Character in Southern Britain* (Oxford University Press, 2008), 149–54.
[281] Warner, *Clayland Colonization*, 9.
[282] Davison, *South-East Norfolk*, 16; Newman, 'Late Roman', 29–32.
[283] Warner, *Origins*, 64–65.
[284] Newman, 'Late Roman', 29–32; Warner, *Origins*, 64–65; Williamson, *Sandlands*, 13.

be found.[285] Such a pattern may also have been driven by changes in agriculture. As will be discussed below, the Early Saxon agrarian economy was centred around the production of livestock as opposed to arable crops; settlement may, therefore, have been drawn into river valleys owing to the grazing resources that could be found in these areas, although it is widely argued that this riverine grassland was not exploited for hay production.[286]

Although the majority of settlements in Early Saxon East Anglia were small, self-sufficient farming communities, this settlement pattern was punctuated by larger elite settlements, such as those at Rendlesham and Coddenham.[287] These high-status centres emerged in the later sixth century and sat at the apex of a system of resource extraction and jurisdictional rights, with renders and tribute brought to the site from the surrounding territory. Although significant, particularly as consumers of agricultural products from the wider territory, such settlements are clearly atypically large and long-lived.

Despite the recent focus on landscape, territories and identity in Early Saxon East Anglia, the agricultural systems of the post-Roman centuries have been the subject of relatively little synthesis,[288] perhaps due to the paucity of evidence for agriculture in this period.[289] It is, however, widely accepted, and indeed rarely challenged, that the fifth century witnessed a substantial decline in cereal cultivation,[290] coterminous with the loss of heavy ploughing technology and the abandonment of the most fertile but intractable soils in the district. This shift in farming systems has been associated with the loss of Imperial taxes, removing the impetus to produce surpluses, as well as some degree of demographic decline, although the extent of this remains debated.[291] The rural economy became centred around relative self-sufficiency, with small surpluses produced as renders and tribute delivered to the aforementioned estate centres. This decline in arable farming is suggested to have resulted in many later Roman arable fields reverting to rough grazing.[292]

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[285] Such patterns were apparent at Witton. See Lawson, *Witton*, 44–58.
[286] Debby Banham and Rosamond Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms and Farming* (Oxford University Press, 2014), 142–45.
[287] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 243–402.
[288] Exceptions include Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*.
[289] As discussed above, Early Saxon pottery survives poorly in the plough soil, limiting the interpretation of cultivation through ceramic manuring scatters.
[290] Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*, 33–34.
[291] Heinrich Harke, 'Kings and Warriors: Population and Landscape from Post-Roman to Norman Britain', in *The Peopling of Britain: The Shaping of a Human Landscape*, ed. Paul Slack and Ryk Ward (Oxford University Press, 2002), 50.
[292] Williamson, *Origins of Norfolk*, 58–60.

With the arable area contracting, the rural economy became focussed around the production of livestock, with Debby Banham and Ros Faith going as far as to suggest that Early Saxon farmers 'valued livestock over plants'.[293] Such a pattern is demonstrated by the limited investment in grain storage and processing features, although these can be difficult to identify in the archaeological record.[294] Early Saxon farmers managed large numbers of livestock, grazed on the upland heaths and wood pastures.[295] The production of wool was also significant in the Early Saxon rural economy.[296]

Although the Early Saxon landscape of East Anglia has been widely discussed, fundamental issues remain unresolved. While the results of metal detecting have been integrated into the study of the Early Saxon landscape more than any other period, much of currently held ideas surrounding the post-Roman countryside are based upon the results of fieldwalking.[297] Due to the relatively imprecise dating of Early Saxon handmade pottery, this dataset leaves little opportunity to understand the precise patterns of occupation and abandonment in the countryside; as such, the chronology of settlement change is little understood. Such issues are exacerbated by the limited ceramic signature of Early Saxon occupation.[298] Early Saxon manuring scatters are similarly slight; this scarcity of evidence for post-Roman cultivation has resulted in limited discussion of arable farming in East Anglia, with focus instead centred upon animal husbandry. Although it has widely been suggested that the fifth century witnessed a sizeable decline of arable farming, the precise chronology and scale of this remains unclear. These issues will be interrogated below.

The Middle Anglo-Saxon Landscape of East Anglia *c*. 650-850

The Middle Saxon period has often been viewed as formative in the development of the English landscape, and, as such, has featured widely in historiographical tradition.[299] The middle centuries of Anglo-Saxon rule have been proposed as instrumental in the development of varied settlement forms, as well as, possibly, the laying out of the open fields that provisioned these sites, although such suggestions have proved controversial.[300] This discussion has largely

[293] Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*, 75.
[294] Hamerow, *Rural Settlements*, 151–55.
[295] Pam Crabtree, *West Stow, Suffolk: Anglo-Saxon Animal Husbandry*, no. 47 (East Anglian Archaeology, 1989), 106–8.
[296] Crabtree, *West Stow,* 106.
[297] Chester-Kadwell, *Early Anglo-Saxon Communities*.
[298] See Chapter Four.
[299] McKerracher, *Farming Transformed*; Duncan Wright, *'Middle Saxon' Settlement and Society* (Archaeopress, 2015).
[300] Jones and Page, *Medieval Villages*; Williamson et al., *Champion*.

focussed on the development of the English Midlands, although discussion of the East Anglian landscape has begun to feature more prominently, particularly in the work of Rippon, Warner and Tom Williamson.[301]

It has been suggested that the Middle Saxon period witnessed a significant transformation in the settlement pattern, termed the 'Middle Saxon shift'.[302] In this model, the wandering settlements of the Early Saxon period shifted a final time in the eighth century away from light, infertile soils, becoming fixed in areas of heavier, more fertile land that could now be cultivated with improved ploughing technology. Examples of this settlement change have been proposed throughout East Anglia, including in East Suffolk.[303]

This 'Middle Saxon shift' model has, however, been widely challenged.[304] It has been suggested that the apparent dislocation of settlement may, in reality, derive from the partial excavation of wandering settlements rather than any real historical pattern, with a more gradual process of settlement change proposed.[305] Some have, however, also argued that the 'long eighth century' witnessed widespread settlement stabilisation rather than dislocation, with the wandering farmsteads of the Early Saxon period becoming rooted in the landscape, eventually flowering into the medieval settlement pattern.[306] Despite this debate, the 'Middle Saxon shift' model has proved pervasive.

The development of these stable settlement forms is inherently intertwined with notions surrounding settlement 'nucleation'. Following the discovery of numerous outlying Early and Middle Saxon settlements underlying open fields, it was suggested that medieval villages derived from a process of nucleation, with farmsteads coalescing before the introduction of Saxo-Norman pottery in the mid-ninth century.[307] These nucleated settlements, through a process of expansion, are suggested to have developed into their High Medieval counterparts. Although the chronology of this nucleation has subsequently been questioned, that the villages of High Medieval England came into existence through a process of nucleation has gained traction within academic discussion.[308]

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[301] Williamson, *Shaping*; Warner, *Origins*; Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*.
[302] C Arnold and P Wardle, 'Early Medieval Settlement Patterns in England', *Medieval Archaeology* 25 (1981): 145–49.
[303] Arnold and Wardle, 'Settlement Patterns', 146; Newman, 'Late Roman', 34.
[304] Hamerow, 'Settlement Mobility'; Williamson et al., *Champion*.
[305] Hamerow, 'Settlement Mobility', 12–13; Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*, 171–73.
[306] Williamson et al., *Champion*, 74–100.
[307] Foard, 'Systematic Fieldwalking'.
[308] The chronology of nucleation has, in particular been questioned. See Carenza Lewis et al., *Village, Hamlet and Field: Changing Medieval Settlements in Central England* (Manchester

Some have, however, argued against such notions.[309] It has been suggested that the number of pre-village nuclei has been vastly overstated; many parishes feature only a single Early or Middle Saxon settlement, or indeed none at all, suggesting that the coalescence of numerous sites into a single agglomeration may be less prevalent than otherwise suggested. Those pre-village nuclei that have been identified also comprise only a small number of loosely agglomerated farmsteads, rather than the fully formed villages implied by proponents of settlement nucleation.[310] As many have argued, the villages of the English Midlands may, instead, have developed from the expansion of existing stable settlement cores as the population of Middle and Late Saxon England grew. These settlements expanded from a single site to form larger agglomerations, although expansion from multiple foci, resulting in 'polyfocal' villages, is also well attested.[311]

While the development of Middle Saxon settlement has been widely discussed in the context of the English Midlands, the landscape and settlement pattern of East Anglia has been subject to relatively little discussion. Although it has widely been argued that a 'Middle Saxon shift' occurred in East Anglia, the precise nature of this settlement movement, along with the extent that this settlement change involved some degree of 'nucleation', remains unclear. While it has been posited that the Middle Saxon landscape of East Anglia was distinct from its Midlands counterpart, [312] others have suggested that regional variation was a relatively late phenomenon, possibly emerging as late as the post-conquest period. [313] Such notions suggest, therefore, that the landscape of East Anglia underwent similar processes of settlement change as the Midlands, characterised by the emergence of agglomerations of settlement, perhaps best termed 'proto-villages'.

These 'primary' settlements were riverine, clustering in the fertile valleys of the rivers and streams that dissect the East Anglian landscape.[314] It has, however, also been argued that the Middle Saxon period witnessed the expansion of settlement into the claylands following the abandonment of these landscapes in the fifth century,[315] underpinned by the proliferation of

University Press, 1997); Christopher Taylor, 'Nucleated Settlement: A View from the Frontier', *Landscape History* 24 (2002): 53–71.

[309] Jones and Page, *Medieval Villages*; Williamson et al., *Champion*, 54–59.

[310] Jones and Page, *Medieval Villages*, 87–92.

[311] Christopher Taylor, 'Polyfocal Settlement and the English Village', *Medieval Archaeology* 21 (1977): 189–93.

[312] Oliver Rackham, *The History of the Countryside* (J.M. Dent, 1986), 4–5.

[313] There is, however, little consensus regarding the processes by which this regionality emerged.

[314] Newman, 'Deben Valley', 31–33.

[315] Newman, 'Late Roman', 34–35. McKerracher presents a more complex view of the resettlement of the clay soils, however. See McKerracher, *Farming Transformed*, 34–36.

the mouldboard plough which enabled such heavy, fertile soils to be cultivated.[316] Middle Saxon settlement was, in East Anglia at least, more widely scattered throughout the countryside than in previous centuries, largely focussed in areas of light, tractable soils but also extending into the claylands following the post-Roman retrenchment of occupation.

The Middle Saxon period also witnessed the proliferation of Christianity within East Anglian society, with monastic institutions planted in the countryside in the later seventh century.[317] The association between newly founded parish churches and settlement in East Anglia has become somewhat of a lynchpin of the study of the Middle Saxon landscape.[318] The spreading influence of Christianity also brought about transformations in the funerary landscape. As suggested above, Early Saxon burials were often furnished with grave goods and were usually located in the area surrounding settlement sites. The spread of Christianity brought about the eventual abandonment of burial with grave goods, as well as the closer integration of cemeteries within settlement sites.[319]

As highlighted above, the Middle Saxon period also witnessed the development of a more diverse range of settlement forms. The rural farmsteads and high-status estate centres of the Early Saxon period were joined by further elite sites, both secular and ecclesiastical,[320] as well as proto-urban centres. The earliest of these urban centres, as well as the most widely researched in the region, is the emporia and *entrepot* at Ipswich,[321] although greater evidence for Middle Saxon activity at Norwich has recently emerged.[322] These urban centres sat alongside an enigmatic class of site, known as 'productive sites', owing to the large quantities of ploughzone material that denote their existence; examples include Barham in Suffolk, as well as

[316] The adoption of heavy ploughing technology may, however, have occurred over a longer period. See Helena Hamerow, 'The "FeedSax" Project: Rural Settlements and Farming in Early Medieval England', in *New Perspectives on the Medieval 'Agricultural Revolution'*, ed. Helena Hamerow and Mark McKerracher, Crop, Stock and Furrow (Liverpool University Press, 2022).
[317] Richard Hoggett, *The Archaeology of the East Anglian Conversion* (Boydell & Brewer, 2010), 52–79; Tim Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation: The Establishment of Religious Houses in East Anglia, c.650–1200* (Boydell & Brewer, 2004), 18–64.
[318] Wade-Martins, *Launditch Hundred*.
[319] Hamerow, 'Communities of the Living and the Dead', 73–75.'
[320] Gareth Davies, 'Early Medieval "Rural Centres" and West Norfolk: A Growing Picture of Diversity, Complexity and Changing Lifestyles', *Medieval Archaeology* 54 (2010): 31–48.
[321] Keith Wade, 'Ipswich', in *The Rebirth of Towns in the West, AD 700-1050*, ed. Richard Hodges and Brian Hobley (Council for British Archaeology, 1988).
[322] David Adams and Graeme Clarke, *Aspects of 7th- to 11th-Century Norwich* (East Anglian Archaeology, 2023).

Burnham in Norfolk.[323] The nature of these sites has been much debated,[324] although it is argued that such sites acted as centres for the burgeoning market economy, distributing manufactured goods such as Ipswich ware pottery to the wider population owing to the large quantities of coinage often recovered, as well as, perhaps, acting as estate centres for peripatetic magnates.

The development of social differentiation and manorialism associated with this thegnly class has been much discussed. It has been suggested that, by the end of the Early Saxon period, extensive lordships, covering areas akin to individual or groups of hundreds, could be found.[325] Throughout the Middle Saxon centuries, and certainly by the end of the period, such extensive territories began to break down into holdings larger than the manors and vills of Domesday book, termed 'multiple estates', granted away to ecclesiastical institutions and local lords.[326] As these 'small shires' fragmented, areas of land were apportioned out to a developing class of local lord, with the status of cultivators on the estate declining as a result; in such models, manorialism developed 'from above', imposed into local society. A more organic trajectory for the development of local lordship has, however, also been posited.[327] It has been proposed that, throughout the course of the Middle and Late Saxon periods, poorer peasants sold their land or put themselves at the disposal of more prosperous members of local society in return for food and sustenance in times of social and economic hardship. Over time, these wealthy members of society accumulated ever-growing holdings, further insulating them from famine and dearth, increasing the likelihood of other, poorer members of society placing themselves at their obligation. Such patterns are most prevalent in areas in which the risk of famine and hardship was greatest, particularly in areas of 'rapid demographic expansion and accelerating social mobility'.[328]

These widespread changes in economy and society were coterminous with 'fundamental transformations' in agriculture, driven by demographic growth.[329] It is often argued that the

[323] John Newman, 'Exceptional Finds, Exceptional Sites? Barham and Coddenham, Suffolk', in *Markets in Early Medieval Europe: Trading and 'Productive' Sites, 650-850*, ed. Tim Pestell and Katharina Ulmschneider (Oxbow Books, 2003); Davies, '"Rural Centres"'.
[324] Tim Pestell and Katharina Ulmschneider, eds, *Markets in Early Medieval Europe: Trading and 'Productive' Sites, 650-850* (Oxbow Books, 2003).
[325] Rosamond Faith, 'Forms of Dominance and the Early Medieval Landscape.', *Medieval Settlement Research* 23 (2008): 9.
[326] Glanville Jones, 'Multiple Estates and Early Settlement', in *English Medieval Settlement*, ed. P. H. Sawyer (Arnold, 1979).
[327] Tom Williamson, *Environment, Society and Landscape in Early Medieval England: Time and Topography* (Boydell & Brewer, 2012), 107–24.
[328] Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 124.
[329] McKerracher, *Farming Transformed*, 2.

Middle Saxon period witnessed a rapid expansion of arable farming;[330] indeed, such was the scale of agricultural change that the period has been compared to the post-medieval agricultural revolution.[331] This burgeoning agricultural output was driven by the expansion of the cultivated area, the adoption of the mouldboard plough and, perhaps, more intensive agricultural practices.[332] This growth in cereal production may have been stimulated by increasing taxation, demographic expansion, as well as the growing non-agriculturally productive population living in market centres such as Ipswich.[333] That there was increasing emphasis on the production of cereal crops is highlighted by the appearance of crop processing and storage structures in East Anglia for the first time since the later Roman period.[334] It has, therefore, widely been implied that the East Anglian countryside was cultivated to a greater extent than in the Early Saxon centuries, with more of the landscape given over to the production of arable crops. While many of these arable fields remained fixed in river valleys, it is widely argued that cultivation expanded on to the interfluves in the claylands, facilitated by heavier ploughing technology that enabled the cultivation of these areas.[335]

It has also been suggested that the Middle Saxon period brought about the intensive management of valley floor meadows for hay, as attested by pollen sequences such as that from Yarnton, Oxfordshire, which implies the extensive management of meadows to produce winter fodder.[336] The factors underpinning this changing agricultural strategy have been debated, although it has been argued that the increasing production of hay crops is intertwined with the proliferation of heavy ploughing technology, requiring a greater number of oxen to be kept throughout the winter.[337] Areas of valley floor grassland may, therefore, have been mown in the Middle Saxon period for the first time since the later Roman centuries.

Settlement and agriculture in Middle Saxon England has been the subject of much debate, although East Anglia has largely featured only on the peripheries of this discussion. As such, key issues remain unresolved. Although the 'Middle Saxon shift' and settlement nucleation have

[330] See, for example, Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*.
[331] Hamerow, '"FeedSax"', 3–24.
[332] Such suggestions run counter to the work of Hamerow, however. See Hamerow, '"FeedSax"'.
[333] Hamerow, '"FeedSax"', 4.
[334] McKerracher, *Farming Transformed*, 72–80.
[335] Emily Forster and Michael Charles, 'Agricultural Land Use in Central, East and South-East England: Arable or Pasture?', in *New Perspectives on the Medieval 'Agricultural Revolution': Crop, Stock and Furrow*, ed. Helena Hamerow and Mark McKerracher (Liverpool University Press, 2022), 77–78.
[336] Gill Hey, *Yarnton: Saxon and Medieval Settlement and Landscape* (Oxford Archaeology, 2004), 47.
[337] Hamerow, *Rural Settlements*, 148.

proven pervasive, the chronology of this settlement change, and indeed its very existence, remains contentious, in part due to the reliance upon poorly dated pottery scatters to understand the development of settlement patterns. It is often suggested that the abandonment of Early Saxon settlement sites occurred in the seventh and eighth centuries, based, in East Anglia at least, on the relative lack of Ipswich ware recovered from earlier farmsteads. The methodology developed in Chapter Two offers, however, the opportunity to closely date this settlement change. The development of manorialism also remains unclear; while some have suggested that the roots of the manors of medieval England can be found buried in the Middle Saxon fragmentation of multiple estates, others have suggested a later, and more long-term, trajectory of development. The incorporation of metalwork into the present study, and the window into the status of settlements in the past that it provides, enables new insight into such patterns.

The Late Saxon Countryside of East Anglia *c.* 850-1100

Although many have stressed the significance of the 'long eighth century' in the development of the English landscape, it has similarly been suggested that the last centuries of the Anglo-Saxon period were key in the development of the countryside, with the roots of the modern East Anglian landscape planted, to a large degree, in the Late Saxon period.[338]

It has widely been suggested that the proliferation of farmsteads laid out above, as well as the expansion of existing settlement foci, continued apace in the Late Saxon period, driven by rapid demographic expansion.[339] Indeed, such was the scale of population growth that, at the time of Domesday, East Anglia was one of the most densely settled regions of England, although this population was unevenly distributed throughout the area.[340]

While it is accepted that the Late Saxon period witnessed both the proliferation of settlement throughout the countryside as well as the *in-situ* expansion of existing occupation sites, the precise processes through which these settlement sites grew and expanded remains controversial. It has been suggested that, in the Middle and Late Saxon centuries, the landscape was punctuated by 'pre-village nuclei', particularly in the English Midlands, although the

[338] Edward Martin, 'Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex: Medieval Rural Settlement in "Greater East Anglia"', in *Medieval Rural Settlement: Britain and Ireland, Ad 800 - 1600*, ed. Neil Christie and Paul Stamper (Windgather, 2012), 234.
[339] Bruce M. S. Campbell, 'The Land', in *A Social History of England, 1200–1500*, ed. Rosemary Horrox and W. Mark Ormrod (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 182.
[340] Henry C. Darby, ed., *The Domesday Geography of Eastern England* (Cambridge University Press, 1971), 356.

existence of these settlement forms has also been posited in East Anglia.[341] Although many have argued that these loose agglomerations had largely formed by the Late Saxon period, it has also been suggested that the nucleation of farmsteads was a much more protracted process, continuing throughout the Late Saxon period, with Taylor suggesting that villages were rare before the later eleventh century.[342] Although the development of these agglomerations of settlement has largely been discussed in the context of the English Midlands, it has been posited that the East Anglian countryside witnessed similar forms of settlement change; it can, therefore, be argued that the landscape of 'Ancient Countryside' was similarly marked by small agglomerations of farmsteads.[343]

The factors underpinning the emergence of these nucleated settlements have been much debated. Some have suggested that rising population and changing socio-economic conditions, particularly the declining area of pasture and the fragmentation of arable holdings, led to the emergence of villages and regular open fields, while others have argued that these nucleated settlement forms spread through emulation. Environmental explanations for this landscape change have, however, been posited, with Williamson, in particular, suggesting that varied soils, precipitation and differing access to water may have influenced the emergence of nucleated settlement forms.[344]

The increasing occupation and exploitation of High Suffolk continued apace in the Late Saxon centuries, with farmsteads widely flung throughout the countryside.[345] This expansion of clayland settlement is inherently intertwined with 'common edge drift', with farmsteads strung around the margins of areas of common grazing, the presence of which is attested by scatters of Thetford ware.[346] The chronology of this transformation of the settlement pattern remains, however, controversial. While the muted origins of common edge settlement have been placed in the Late Saxon period,[347] others have favoured a post-conquest date for this 'common edge drift', suggesting that this settlement form was rare before the twelfth century; such notions are again based upon fieldwalking datasets.[348] These issues remain largely unresolved, with little consensus surrounding the date that common edge settlement emerged, and indeed, the

[341] Williamson et al., *Champion*, 189–93.
[342] Lewis et al., *Village, Hamlet and Field*; Taylor, 'Nucleated Settlement'.
[343] Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*, 186–88.
[344] Williamson, *Time and Topography*.
[345] Warner, *Clayland Colonization*, 13.
[346] Warner, *Clayland Colonization*, 17–18.
[347] Tom Williamson, 'The Franshams in Context: Isolated Churches and Common Edge Drift', in *Landscapes and Artefacts*, ed. Steven Ashley and Adrian Marsden (Archaeopress, 2014), 167.
[348] Wade-Martins, *Launditch Hundred*, 88.

factors underpinning its development. This limited understanding derives, in part, from the use of poorly dated pottery scatters to understand the growth of common edge settlement; the methodology developed in Chapter Two offers, however, the opportunity to refine this chronology. [349]

The emergence of common edge settlement in East Anglia has significant implications for the development of regionality in the English landscape. It has been argued in the previous pages that the settlement pattern of East Anglia was, in the period before the Norman conquest, somewhat akin to that of the Midlands. While this is indeed true, that the settlement patterns of East Anglia and the Midlands began to diverge in the Late Saxon period, at the earliest, has been taken to suggest that regionality was a relatively late phenomenon.[350] Such notions are, however, controversial, with both earlier and later dates for regional variation proposed.[351]

The landscape of Late Saxon East Anglia was increasingly punctuated by varied settlement forms including urban and proto-urban centres, ranging from towns such as Ipswich, Norwich and Dunwich to smaller market centres such as Sudbury. Alongside these settlements could be found monastic institutions, such as Bury St Edmunds and Hoxne, although the impact of Viking incursions on religious settlements in East Anglia was severe.[352] Significant transformations also occurred in the Late Saxon societal landscape. Although the nature of Viking settlement in East Anglia is debated, it is apparent that migration took place, with settlers from Northern Europe occupying much of East Anglia.[353] This occupation has been linked to substantial changes in tenurial and landholding structures in the East, as well as changes in place-names and, possibly, the origins of open fields.[354]

Although the precise chronology is currently unclear, it is often asserted that the Late Saxon period witnessed both the continued proliferation of manorialism and the deepening power of local lords. The mechanisms by which such developments emerged has been debated; some have seen the origins of manors in the breakdown of larger territories and estates, with manorial

[349] Williamson, *Shaping*; Williamson, *Time and Topography*.
[350] Williamson et al., *Champion*, 198.
[351] Rippon, for example, posits a complex mix of reasons as underpinning regionality in Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*, 250–68.
[352] Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation*, 65–100.
[353] The nature of this migration and settlement has been much debated. See, for example, Dawn Hadley, *The Vikings in England: Settlement, Society and Culture*, Manchester Medieval Studies (Manchester University Press, 2006); Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 72–81.
[354] For a review of the debate, see Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 2–17. For the link between Viking settlement and landscape change, see Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 72–81; David Boulton, *Viking Migration and Settlement in East Anglia: The Place-Name Evidence* (Windgather Press, 2023).

lords inserted 'from above' into newly granted lands,[355] while others have argued for a much more organic process of social differentiation among the peasantry.[356] Yet, regardless of the mechanisms by which it occurred, the Late Saxon period witnessed greater local lordship, a development coterminous with the appearance of high status manorial centres within the rural landscape.[357]

The settlement change laid out above was coterminous with significant arable expansion particularly in the claylands,[358] the result of the proliferation of heavy ploughing technology which enabled areas of intractable clay to be cultivated.[359] Although some have suggested that the development of open field agriculture was a Middle Saxon phenomenon, it is largely accepted that this growth of cereal farming in the Late Saxon period may have occurred alongside the emergence of communal forms of agriculture, culminating in the development of open fields. Such notions have been much discussed in the context of the English Midlands, dominated by regular open fields. In this system, the holdings of individual farmers took the form of strips, scattered in a regular pattern with those of neighbouring landholders; such strips were organised into furlongs for cropping, while groups of furlongs were arranged into two or three large open fields. Each year, one field was left fallow, grazed by the communal flock, while the other fields were cultivated.

East Anglian open fields, where they existed, were, however, of subtly different form, although it must be acknowledged that areas such as West Norfolk were marked by open fields organised along more regular lines.[360] East Anglian open fields were largely 'irregular', that is, the holdings of individual farmers were clustered in particular areas of the field, of which there were often many, rather than regularly intermixed. Communal controls over cropping were much more limited in these areas.

The extent of these intermixed forms of agriculture should not, however, be overstated. Although open fields occasionally covered the majority of land in a vill in the Midlands, these intermixed holdings were, in East Anglia, interspersed with land held in severalty, often enclosed

[355] Jones, 'Multiple Estates'.
[356] Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 33–34.
[357] David Gould et al., 'Where Power Lies: Lordly Power Centres in the English Landscape, C. AD 800–1200', *The Antiquaries Journal* 104 (2024): 72–106.
[358] Hamerow, *Rural Settlements*, 147–49.
[359] The chronology of the adoption of mouldboard plough is, however, controversial. See Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*, 45–50.
[360] Williamson, *Shaping*, 127–32. For the historiography of open fields, see Williamson, *Shaping*, 1–21.

with hedges.[361] Some of this land was held as manorial demesne; indeed, the dominance of enclosed 'block demesne' in some areas of East Anglia has been highlighted, although significant variations in landholding and field patterns are apparent throughout the region.[362] While irregular open fields were extensive, areas of enclosed land held in severalty could be found throughout the countryside.

The factors underpinning the emergence of these communal forms of agriculture have been much debated. Some have suggested that patterns of Germanic settlement in the Early Saxon period influenced the emergence of regionality,[363] an idea revived more recently in the context of Viking settlement in East Anglia.[364] Others have argued that agrarian factors influenced the development of regional field systems. In an influential article, Joan Thirsk suggested that the Midlands, due to sustained population growth, witnessed a crisis of pasture, necessitating greater community cohesion to make best use of post-harvest fallows and the remaining areas of grazing land.[365] The breakdown of 'multiple estates', severing farmers from their ancestral grazing land, may have exacerbated this lack of pasture.[366] This restructuring of grazing was coterminous with the reorganisation of previously chaotic intermixed holdings, resulting in the regular field systems of the English Midlands. Others have, however, emphasised the long-term development of open fields, the result of the regularisation of intermixed strips in the open fields to ensure that 'the problems of competition would be minimised'.[367]

More recently, however, Williamson has suggested that open fields may have emerged as a result of environmental factors. While nucleated villages remained fixed in the landscape to facilitate the rapid establishment of plough teams, open field systems derived from partible inheritance and the sharing of assarted land. These methods of land division resulted, however, in complex and inefficient arable holdings. In order to ensure equal access to land both in terms of quality as well as accessibility during cultivation, these holdings may have been recast in their more regular form.[368] Little consensus has been reached, and the emergence of open fields is still the subject of much debate.

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[361] Edward Martin and Max Satchell, *Wheare Most Inclosures Be: East Anglian Fields: History, Morphology and Management* (East Anglian Archaeology, 2008).
[362] Martin and Satchell, *Wheare Most Inclosures Be*, 193–213.
[363] Howard Gray, *English Field Systems* (Harvard University Press, 1915).
[364] Martin and Satchell, *Wheare Most Inclosures Be*, 217–25.
[365] Joan Thirsk, 'The Common Fields', *Past & Present* 29 (1964): 3–25; Joan Thirsk, 'The Origin of the Common Fields', *Past & Present* 33 (1966): 142–47.
[366] Harold Fox, 'Approaches to the Adoption of the Midlands System', in *The Origins of Open-Field Agriculture*, ed. Trevor Rowley (Croom Helm, 1981).
[367] Lewis et al., *Village, Hamlet and Field*, 199.
[368] Williamson, *Shaping*, 141–59.

Although a coherent narrative of the development of the Late Saxon landscape has been laid out above, key issues remain unresolved. While it is largely accepted that common edge settlement in East Anglia has Late Saxon roots, the development of this settlement form has been treated as uniform throughout East Anglia and little consensus has been reached regarding the precise chronology of this settlement change; such issues largely derive from the reliance upon poorly dated scatters of pottery to understand the emergence of common edge farmsteads. The expansion of cultivation in the last centuries of Anglo-Saxon rule has similarly been extensively debated. Yet, while it is often implied that the period from the eighth to the fourteenth centuries witnessed the inexorable growth of arable farming, the precise scale of this expansion of cultivation remains to be quantified.

The High Medieval Landscape of East Anglia *c.* 1100-1350

The development of the countryside in the High Middle Ages has been the subject of much debate, perhaps more so than any other period, with the emergence of nucleated and dispersed settlements, as well as their attendant field systems, much discussed.[369] It was in this period that many of the characteristic features of the English landscape were fossilised into the countryside, with parish churches, common edge settlement and the villages of the Midlands each developing and proliferating in the High Medieval centuries.

It has long been noted that the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries witnessed a period of unabated population growth only brought to an end by the demographic catastrophes of the fourteenth century, with parts of East Anglia among the most densely occupied regions of England.[370] This demographic growth was, perhaps unsurprisingly, coterminous with a significant expansion of settlement, reflected in an explosion in the number of occupation sites identified in fieldwalking surveys, although the ambiguity of High Medieval ceramic sequences in East Anglia, particularly those coarse wares found on low status sites, prevents precise interpretation of the chronology of this settlement change.[371]

This population growth resulted in the widespread colonisation of the claylands, with settlement scattered throughout the countryside, including across the interfluves. Such was the scale of settlement expansion that the claylands, rather than areas of lighter soil, became the core areas

[369] David Hall, *The Open Fields of England* (Oxford University Press, 2014); Jones and Page, *Medieval Villages*; Lewis et al., *Village, Hamlet and Field*; Williamson, *Time and Topography*; Williamson, *Shaping*.
[370] Campbell, 'The Land', 182; Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 183.
[371] Rogerson, *Fransham*, 89–168.

of occupation, a reversal of the prehistoric and Early Saxon settlement pattern.[372] While it is usually accepted that common edge settlement forms emerged in the Late Saxon period, this expansion of clayland occupation was coterminous with the proliferation of settlement around the margins of common wastes. The decades preceding the Black Death witnessed the climax of common edge settlement, a pattern corroborated by the abandonment of some common edge tenements in the post-Black Death period.[373]

It has often been remarked, and indeed rarely challenged, that this migration of settlement, in many cases, caused parish churches to become isolated, standing alone amongst the fields, or, on occasion, accompanied by a single farm or rectory. The prevalence of isolated churches in East Anglia has been associated with their early foundation date; with churches founded before the period of common edge drift, greater opportunities are apparent for settlement to drift away from such sites. [374]

The continued development of common edge settlement, again, has important implications for understanding regionality in the many countrysides of England. Although, as highlighted above, the roots of common edge settlement may be found in the pre-conquest period, the continued proliferation of this settlement form suggests that the development of the divergent settlement patterns of England, and therefore, regionality at a large scale, may belong to the post-conquest period. The value of drawing such sharp dichotomies between the various landscapes of England has, however, been called into question.[375]

Up to this point, discussion has largely focussed on those areas characterised by fertile, heavy soils; such patterns are reflected in historiography more widely.[376] Those areas characterised by acid sands, such as the Suffolk Sandlings and Breckland, have, on occasion, been viewed as little more than a marginal 'impoverished backwater'.[377] Yet, the landscapes of Breckland and the Sandlings were cultivated, as well as grazed by vast flocks of sheep, with 'all but the worst … soils' under the plough.[378]

It has been highlighted above that settlement took the form of dispersed farmsteads and hamlets in the East Anglian countryside; such notions are indeed largely true. In some areas of

[372] Williamson, *Sandlands*, 17.
[373] Rogerson, *Fransham*, 173.
[374] Williamson, 'The Franshams in Context', 175–78.
[375] Williamson et al., *Champion*, 178–89.
[376] Exceptions include Mark Bailey, *A Marginal Economy? East Anglian Breckland in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge University Press, 1989); Williamson, *Sandlands*.
[377] Williamson, *Sandlands*, 17.
[378] Williamson, *Sandlands*, 17.

East Anglia, such as West Norfolk, however, settlement took on a more nucleated form, although rather more sprawling than the tight agglomerations of settlement of the Midlands.[379] Many factors have been posited as underpinning these divergent settlement patterns, ranging from long-term cultural factors to the demands of communal flock management and water access.[380]

The High Middle Ages also witnessed the further proliferation of manorialism in the East Anglian countryside, although this was often more fragmented than in Midland counties.[381] There were, however, substantial variations in the strength of local lords and the control they exercised over the population. The claylands were largely characterised by numerous small manors; in such areas, manorial control was weakest, with peasants subject to limited labour services and dues.[382] In the Sandlings and Breckland, however, manors were, on the whole, both larger and exercised more control over those living on the land.

The High Medieval landscape was marked by further diversification in the forms of settlement apparent in the countryside. Urban settlements such as Ipswich, Norwich and Thetford continued to grow, joined by smaller economic centres such as Framlingham and King's Lynn. The emergence of these large settlements occurred alongside an expansion in trade and markets, both within towns as well as throughout the countryside. Monastic institutions, such as at Butley, Aldeby and Bromholm proliferated, while overtly high-status sites, such as castles, also emerged in the High Middle Ages, as at Eye, Framlingham and Bungay.

The widely acknowledged population growth discussed in the previous pages was coterminous with an explosion of cultivation, reflected in extensive manuring scatters recovered by fieldwalking surveys throughout East Anglia.[383] Much of this arable expansion occurred in the claylands, with fields carved from the upland wood pasture and woodland. Indeed, many have suggested that the expansion of arable farming in the Sandlings was more muted, particularly on the most infertile soils.[384]

While it has been suggested above that the roots of open fields can be found in the landscape of Late Saxon England, the flowering of this agricultural system continued into the High Medieval

[379] Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 143–45. See also Andrew G. Lowerre, 'The Atlas of Rural Settlement in England GIS', *Landscapes* 11 (2010): 21–44.
[380] Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*, 250–68; Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 135–46.
[381] Campbell, 'The Land', 190–96; Bruce Campbell, 'The Complexity of Manorial Structure in Medieval Norfolk: A Case Study', *Norfolk Archaeology* 39 (1986): 225–61.
[382] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 33.
[383] Rogerson, *Fransham*, 94–164.
[384] Bailey, for example, highlights the lack of cultivation on agriculturally marginal soils. See Bailey, *A Marginal Economy?*, 56–64.

period. While the form and function of regular open fields have been much debated, many historians have overlooked the importance of other agricultural systems in the countryside, particularly in those areas of light land such as the acid sands of East Anglia.[385] In these areas, a system of 'sheep corn husbandry' was practiced, with large flocks of sheep grazed on upland heaths during the day before being closely folded on arable fields at night to restore fertility; in such agricultural systems, the heathland acted as a 'nutrient reservoir', with a steady flow of fertility from the heaths to the arable land.[386] Although these fields were usually organised on regular lines much as in the Midlands, such systems differ from the 'Champion norm' due to the focus on the fold course as one of the defining institutions of communal farming.[387]

The High Middle Ages was a time of significant expansion in the landscape of East Anglia. The countryside, on the eve of the fourteenth century, was occupied, cultivated and prosperous. Settlement proliferated throughout the landscape, housing a larger population that at any time since the later Roman period. While in areas of light soil such as Breckland, settlement remained fixed in the valleys of rivers and streams, farmsteads in High Suffolk and South Norfolk were widely scattered throughout the landscape, often huddling around the tattered remnants of once extensive wastes. Although the form of this settlement pattern is widely accepted, substantial issues remain unresolved, not least the chronology of this settlement change; such issues, again, are largely due to the reliance upon poorly dated pottery scatters to interpret settlement patterns.

A wide range of environments were brought under the plough in the High Middle Ages, ranging from the fertile, intractable clays of High Suffolk to areas of light sand. Much of this land was farmed in irregular open fields, although land held in severalty could be found in many areas. In areas of light soil, however, sheep corn husbandry was the main agricultural strategy, although this has somewhat been overlooked by historians with a 'midlands-centric' approach.[388] The extent of this expansion of cultivation, as well as the chronology of this agrarian change has, however, remained debated, with the scale of arable farming in the landscape rarely quantified. The methodology here employed offers opportunities to understand the development of arable cultivation in East Suffolk.

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[385] Exceptions include John Belcher, *The Foldcourse and East Anglian Agriculture and Landscape, 1100-1900* (Boydell & Brewer, 2020); Bailey, *A Marginal Economy?*; Williamson, *Shaping*, 91–122.
[386] Williamson, *Sandlands*, 57.
[387] For further analysis of the fold course, see Belcher, *Foldcourse*.
[388] Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*, 1–31.

East Anglian Archaeology: Problems and Possibilities

The largely accepted narrative of the development of the landscape of East Anglia has been laid out above. As has been highlighted throughout, much of current understanding is based upon the results of four major fieldwalking surveys,[389] particularly those carried out by Davison, Newman, Rogerson, and Wade Martins.[390] While this fieldwalking has contributed much to knowledge of settlement patterns and arable farming from prehistory to the present day, there are sizeable issues in understanding the development of the countryside solely through fieldwalking datasets, particularly the imprecise dating of ceramics and the relatively limited range of activities reflected in scatters of pottery recovered from the plough soil. Due to this, key issues, particularly surrounding the chronological development of the East Anglian countryside, remain unresolved.

Although it has been demonstrated in Chapter Two that the integration of metal detecting data into studies of the past offers greater chronological precision than pottery scatters alone, as well as offering insight into patterns of wealth and status, scatters of metalwork from the plough soil have been little employed in studies of the East Anglian landscape. While the paucity of datasets has often prevented insight into the development of the countryside, particularly in the Early and Middle Saxon period, the 'blended approach' to ploughzone archaeology set out above, and the landscape scale of the following study, offers the opportunity to interrogate the traditional narrative of landscape development in East Suffolk and refine the chronology of the development of the East Anglian countryside.

[389] Much of Rippon's analysis is, for example, based upon fieldwalking datasets in Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*, 138–200.
[390] Newman, 'Late Roman'; Davison, *South-East Norfolk*; Rogerson et al., *Barton Bendish and Caldecote*; Rogerson, *Fransham*.

Chapter Five: The Later Roman Landscape of East Suffolk *c.* AD 250-410.

The Later Roman Settlement Pattern

The later Roman countryside of East Suffolk was cleared and occupied by a relatively large population. Romano-British settlements were scattered throughout the countryside at a density of approximately 1 settlement per 1.5 km^2, suggesting a significant degree of occupation and exploitation.[391] Indeed, isolated areas of manuring suggest the presence of further settlements masked by non-arable land-use, while the PAS data implies the existence of further possible settlements in the survey parishes, although some of these scatters of later Roman metalwork may derive from the Early Saxon reuse of earlier material (Figure 5.1).[392] Many of these later Roman settlement sites appear, particularly in the Sandlings, to be associated with areas of High Medieval settlement such as parish churches and manorial sites; the significance of this relationship will be discussed in Chapter Ten (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.1: fourth-century coinage from Blaxhall displaying evidence of post-Roman reuse, having been pierced for suspension. Left –SF-BFC91E copper alloy nummus of Constantine I. Right – SF-B71B9F copper alloy nummus of the House of Constantine. All PAS images reproduced under CC BY Attribution Copyright License. Images have been cropped and are not to scale.

Although many have suggested that the density of settlement was greatly impacted by soil type,[393] with the claylands more densely settled than the more marginal soils of the Sandlings, the density of occupation appears relatively uniform between each of the subregions here interrogated.[394] While Newman suggested that the settlement density of the claylands was perhaps twice that of the Sandlings, owing to the greater 'carrying capacity' of these fertile soils,[395] the present analysis suggests that the settlement density was, instead, similar across

[391] Similar settlement densities have been identified elsewhere. See Taylor, 'Roman Settlements in the Nene Valley', 107–20; Williamson, 'The Roman Countryside', 226.
[392] Later Roman metalwork in Blaxhall associated with an Early Saxon cemetery, for example, likely results from the post-Roman reuse of earlier material.
[393] Williamson, 'The Roman Countryside', 228.
[394] Newman, 'Late Roman', 30.
[395] Newman, 'Late Roman', 30.

both countrysides (Figure 5.3). Similar settlement densities, unaffected by variations in soil type, have been recorded elsewhere.[396]

It is valuable to briefly explore the factors influencing these disparate interpretations of the same dataset. Although not overtly expressed, it is apparent that Newman utilised a much lower threshold to denote settlement than the 80 sherds per hectare here employed. As will later be discussed, owing to varying agricultural practices, manuring scatters are more intense in the claylands than the Sandlings; hence, with a lower threshold for settlement employed by Newman, scatters that represent the intensive manuring of arable land were incorrectly conflated with settlement, causing the density of clayland occupation to be overstated. Such notions reinforce the subjectivity of interpreting settlement patterns from ploughzone datasets.

[396] Jones and Page, *Medieval Villages*, 51–52; Christopher Taylor, *Village and Farmstead: A History of Rural Settlement in England* (George Philip, 1983), 63–64.

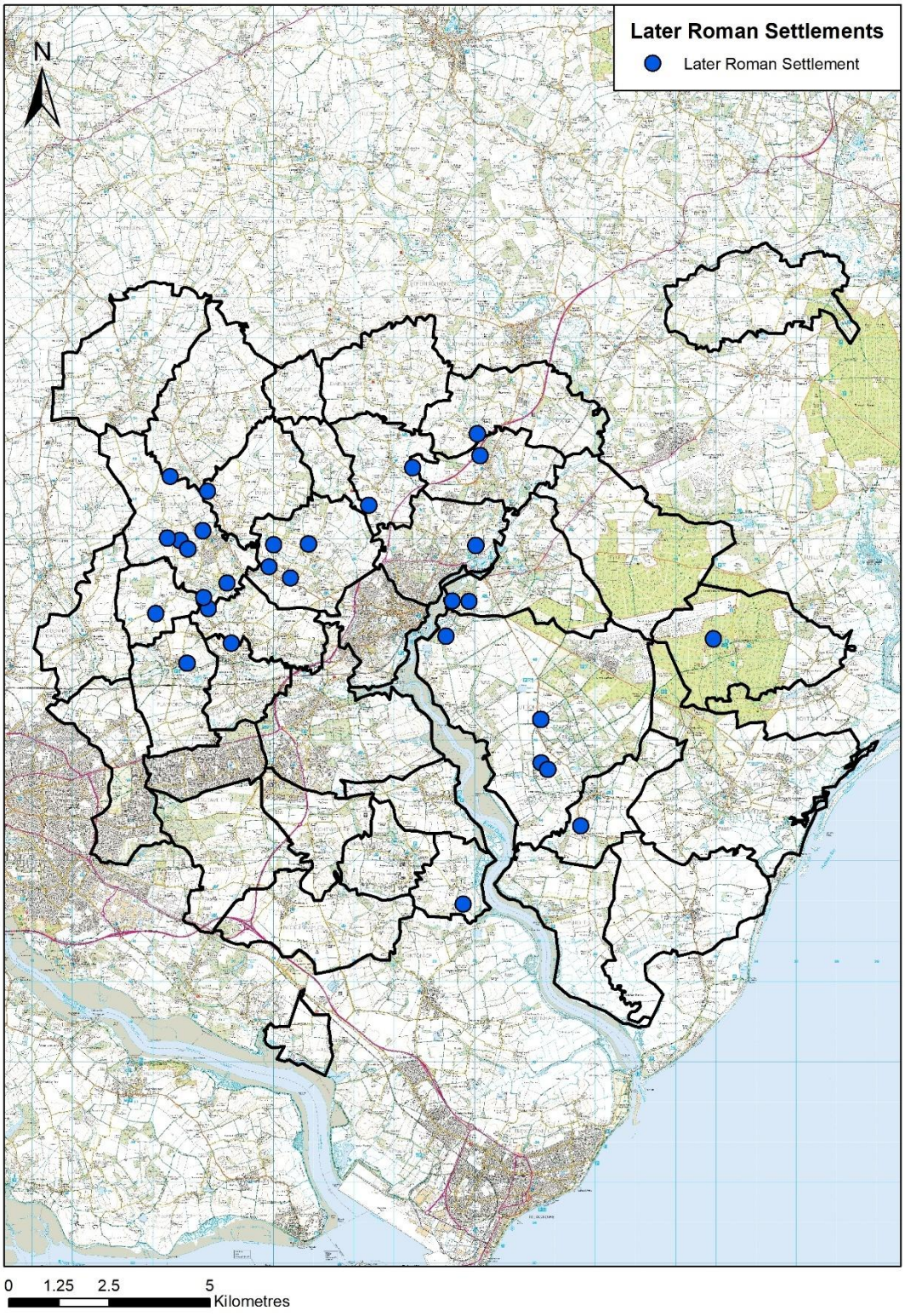

Figure 5.2: the distribution of later Roman settlements in the study area, as denoted by 80 or more sherds per hectare. It is clear that the Roman countryside was cleared, settled and exploited. The lack of settlement to the southwest of the study area is more apparent than real, reflecting limited investigation by both Newman and metal detectorists owing to ground cover in the area. Source: DVSA 1-37.

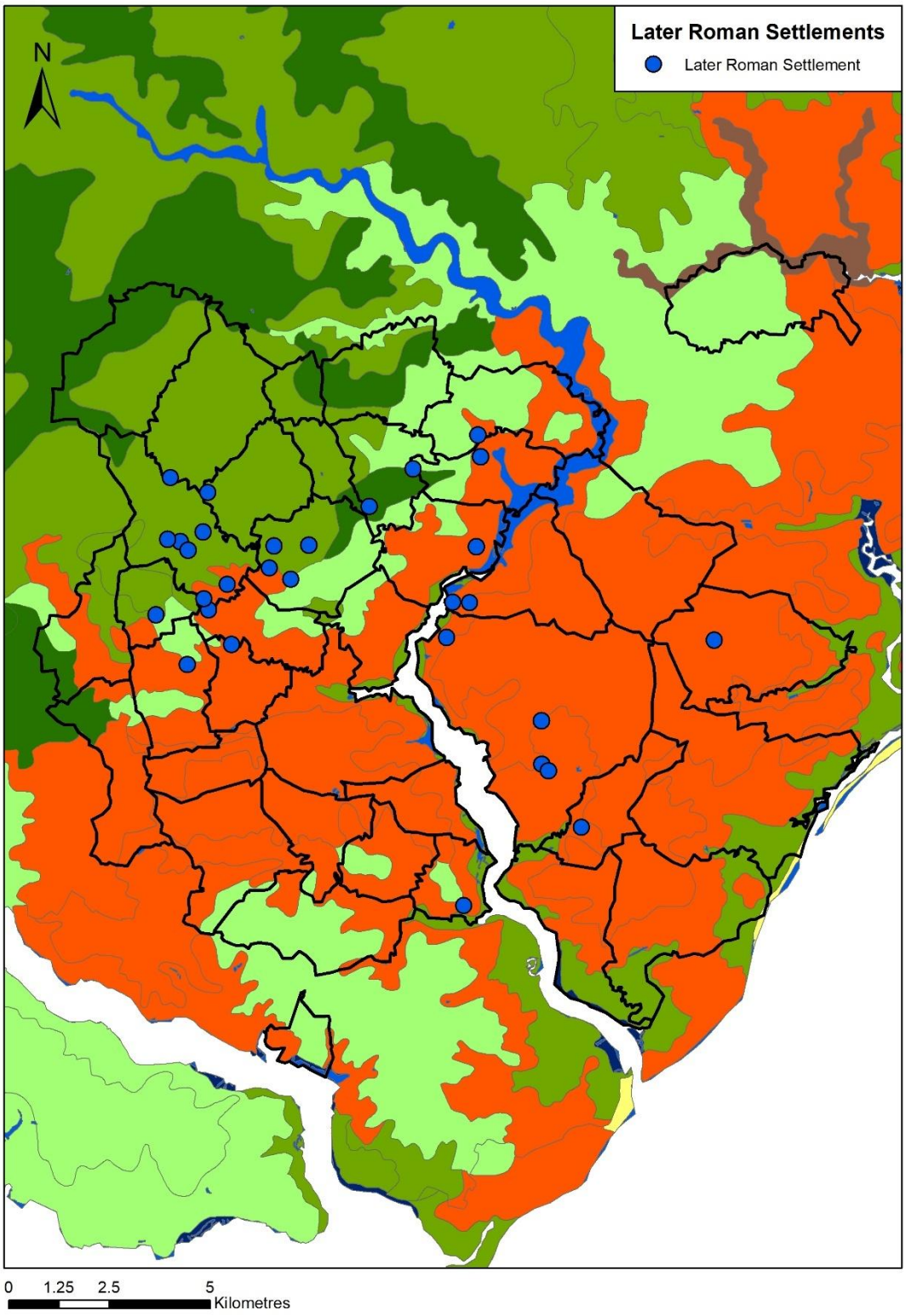

Figure 5.3: the distribution of later Roman settlement in the study area and its relationship with the dominant soils of the area. It is apparent that the density of settlement was little affected by soil type. Source: DVSA 1-37.

Later Roman Social Differentiation

While the density of settlement in the study area was unaffected by soil type, there are apparent variations in contemporary social structures and landholding patterns manifested in the metalwork signatures from the claylands and Sandlings. It has widely been suggested that East Suffolk, and East Anglia more widely, was characterised by few Roman villas, a manifestation of limited 'Romanisation'.[397] Those villas that have been identified in the region are relatively minor on a national scale and are suggested to have emerged as the result of 'wider-scale landscape reorganisation' late in the Roman period, coterminous with the increasing social polarisation and the movement of wealth and authority into the countryside from urban centres.[398]

In areas characterised by numerous sizeable villas, it is often suggested that land was held as large estates, farmed by an unfree, servile class.[399] Indeed, the significant number of villas on the margins of the East Anglian Fens has been suggested to imply the existence of an Imperial Estate in the area, settled by unfree tenants and slaves.[400] In contrast, while subject to much less academic attention, it is implied that areas characterised by few villas were settled and cultivated by peasant proprietors, each farming a smallholding.[401] In such interpretations, these owner-occupiers represent the majority of the population, cultivating moderately sized farms to produce food for subsistence, as well as small surpluses to pay Imperial taxes and trade at market centres.

The evidence from the study area nuances such assertions, however. As suggested in Chapter Two there is an association between the quantity and composition of metalwork recovered from later Roman settlements and the wealth of occupation and activity in the area. Clayland parishes such as Dallinghoo and Hasketon are characterised by numerous small and moderate metalwork scatters, suggestive of relatively prosperous peasant dwellings; these sites imply that later Roman clayland society was characterised by a wealthy peasant class, although some social differentiation is implied by variations in the scale of metalwork scatters within the subregion.[402] Similar landholding patterns, dominated by farmsteads of the 'middling sort', have been

[397] Davies, *The Land of Boudica*, 187; Mattingly, *Imperial Possession*, 384.
[398] Smith, 'The East', 221.
[399] Gerrard, *Ruin*, 236–43.
[400] Tim Malim, *Stonea and the Roman Fens* (The History Press, 2005), 125.
[401] Moore et al., *Roman Suffolk*, 45.
[402] 11 items of metalwork were recovered from the Ufford site, for example, while 31 were recovered from Burgh, for example.

Figure 5.4: artefacts from the PAS associated with the villa site in Sutton. **1.** SF-9C36D4 copper alloy nummus of Maximianus. **2.** SF-8604A4 copper alloy later Roman bracelet. **3.** SF-1E0CD6 silver *siliqua* of Honorius. **4.** SF-58F9E5 copper alloy Roman seal box lid. Images not to scale.

Figure 5.5: artefacts from the PAS associated with lower status farmsteads in the claylands. A much less diverse range of artefacts have been recovered from such sites. **1.** SF-6B9476 – copper alloy later Roman bracelet. **2.** SF-98BD76 copper alloy nummus of Constantine II .**3.** SF-C31C95 copper alloy nummus of Constantine I. Images not to scale.

identified in other clayland landscapes, such as Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire.[403]

Yet, while clayland society was characterised by relatively widespread prosperity, a much greater polarisation of wealth is evident in the Sandlings, likely reflecting a differing social structure, manifested in the numerous extensive metalwork scatters evident in this subregion. Such sites likely represent the residences of wealthy, locally significant landowners holding large estates, as in Sutton, where a scatter of over 350 artefacts has been recovered associated with the cropmarks of a villa, albeit a rather small building on a national scale set among a long-lived settlement complex (Figures 5.4, 5.6 and 5.8).[404] Such wealthy settlements are relatively numerous, suggesting that these prosperous settlement centres, and the social structure they imply, were pervasive (Figure 5.9).[405] Indeed, some 85% of the 1,767 later Roman artefacts in the study area derive from the Sandlings, suggesting that substantial material wealth was present in the subregion.[406]

While the Sandlings was characterised by wealthy landowners, the distribution of this wealth, as attested by metalwork scatters, was relatively polarised. The landscape of elite residences was punctuated by numerous small sites from which spreads of pottery but only limited quantities of metalwork have been recovered; these scatters likely represent small, low status settlements, perhaps occupied by an unfree servile class of tied labourers, cultivating the lands of the large estates in the area.

Although it is widely implied that the landscape of East Anglia was farmed by owner-occupiers, the evidence laid out above suggests that such arguments oversimplify more complex, and, in all likelihood, fluid landholding structures. While prosperous peasant proprietors indeed appear prevalent in the claylands, the Sandlings was marked by landed estates, although the density of these sites implies that these estates were relatively minor on a national scale. The holdings of these wealthy proprietors were settled and cultivated by farmers living in relatively impoverished settlements, perhaps of servile or unfree status. Subregional variations in the social structures of later Roman East Suffolk, and the ploughzone signatures they engender, are apparent; such patterns suggest that the regional approach taken by many studying later Roman

[403] Martin Millett, '"By Small Things Revealed": Rural Settlement and Society', in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Britain*, ed. Martin Millett et al. (Oxford University Press, 2016), 708–9.
[404] Suffolk HER SUT 022.
[405] At least 50 metalwork finds are recorded on 7 sites in the Sandlings, compared with 1 in the claylands.
[406] Only 69% of all metalwork was recovered from areas of acid sand, suggesting that such patterns are indeed real, rather than the result of recovery bias.

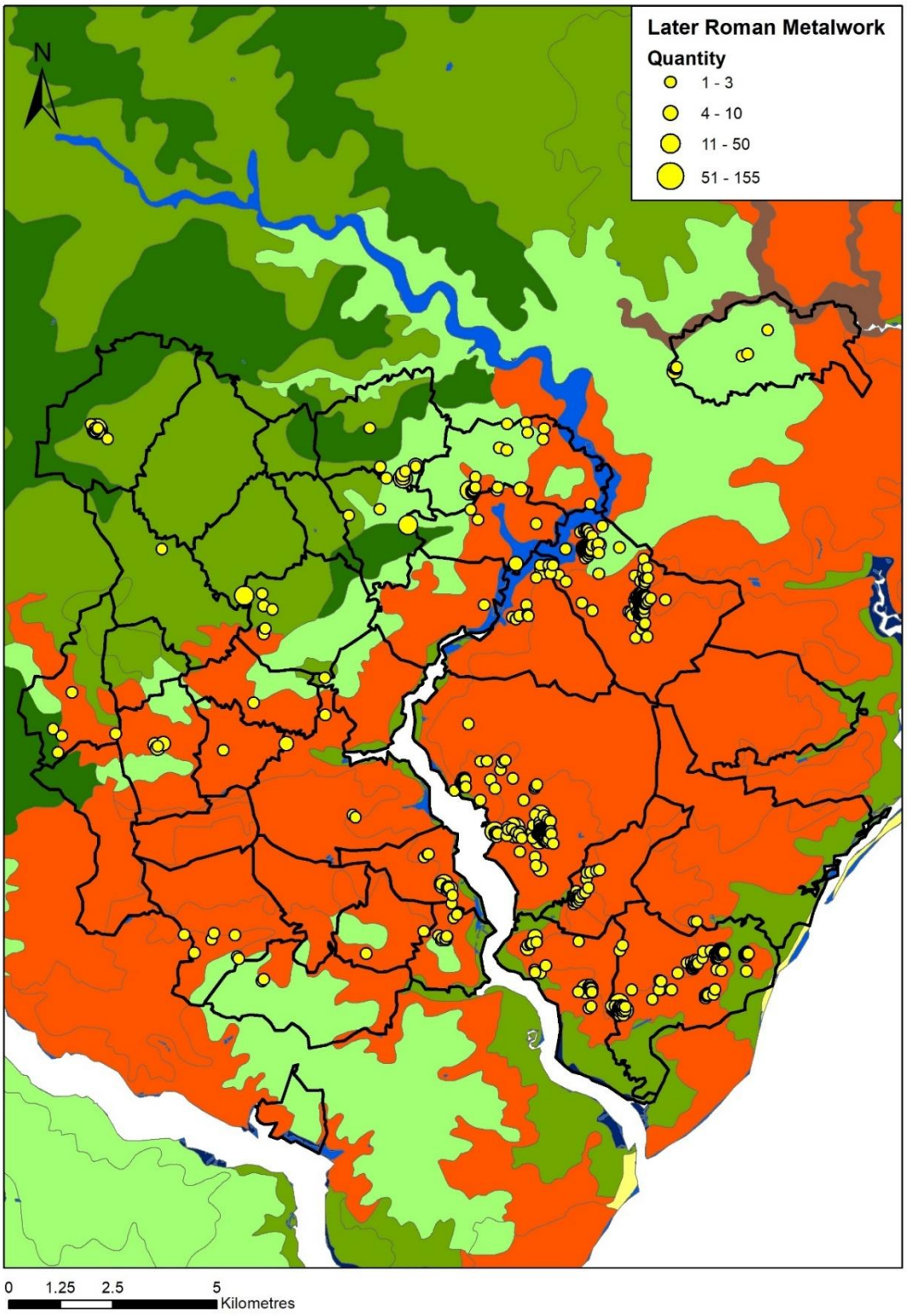

Figure 5.6: the distribution of later Roman metalwork in the study area and its relationship with the soils of the region. It is apparent that much more material wealth was in circulation in the Sandlings. Source: PAS.

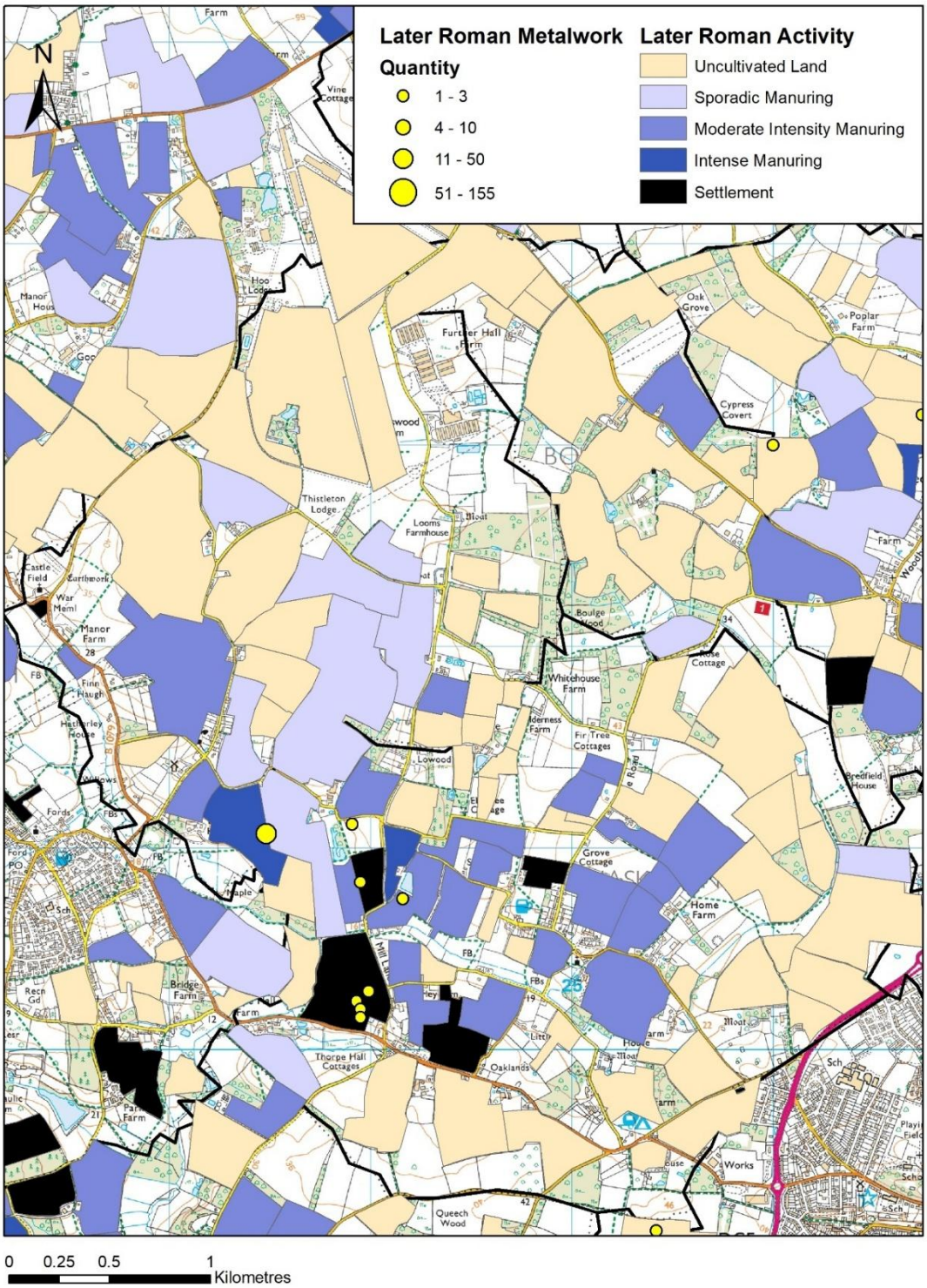

Figure 5.7: the distribution of later Roman pottery and metalwork in the claylands around Burgh. While metal detecting has not taken place on many of the ceramically-attested settlement sites, those that have been subject to investigation are characterised by only limited spreads of metalwork. The large spread of material in the west of the figure is located in Burgh, characterised by 31 artefacts, largely coins. While significant in the context of the claylands, this spread of material is minor compared to many of those in the Sandlings, demarcated by many hundreds of artefacts. Source: DVSA 1-37, PAS.

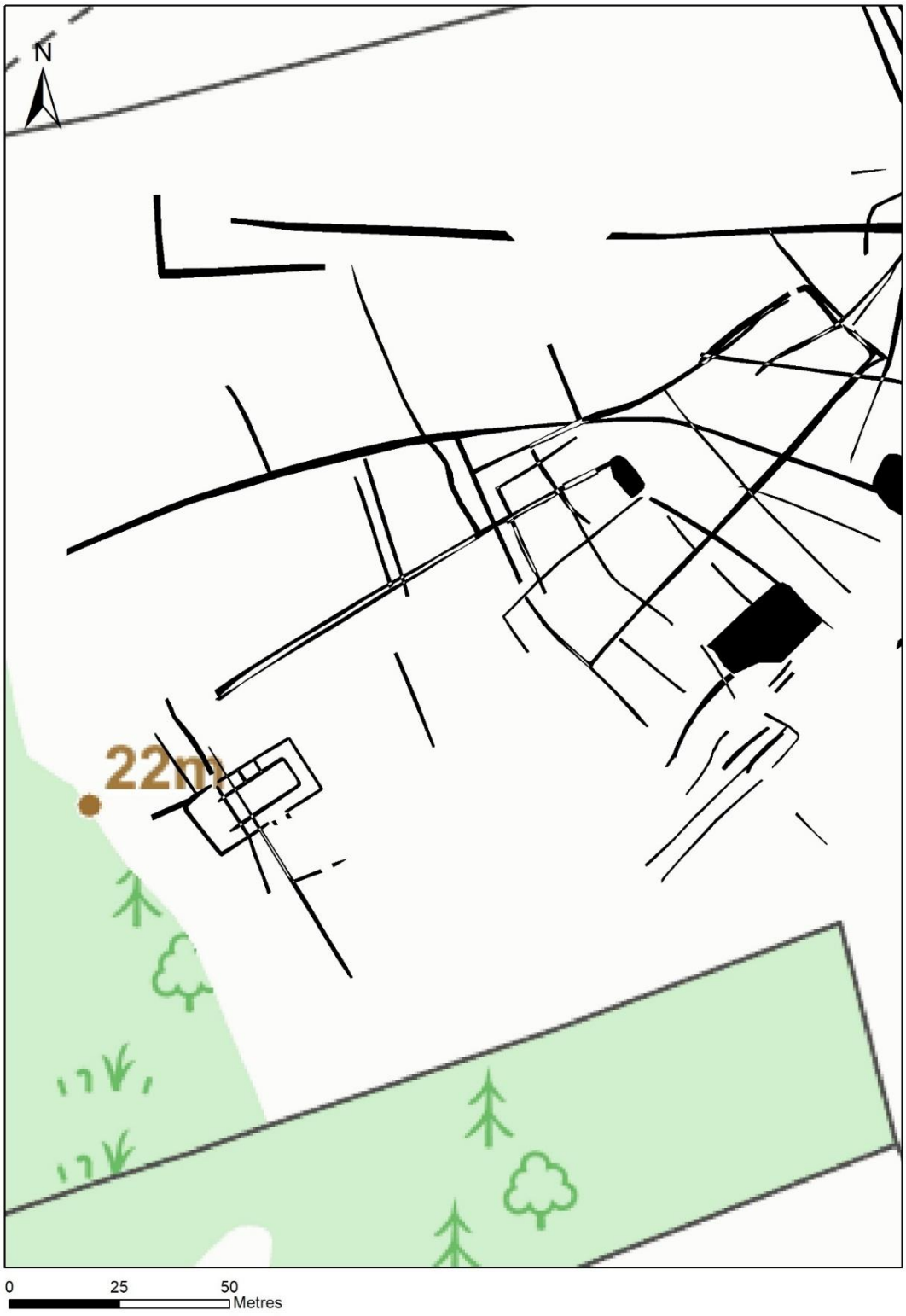

Figure 5.8: the cropmarks of the probable Roman villa in Sutton , set among a wider cropmark complex at TM3061045378. Cropmark data from Historic England Aerial Archaeology Mapping, https://historicengland.hub.arcgis.com/maps/e08a1ca270ac4caa8ba5efcb74f86a74/about, accessed 12/05/2025.

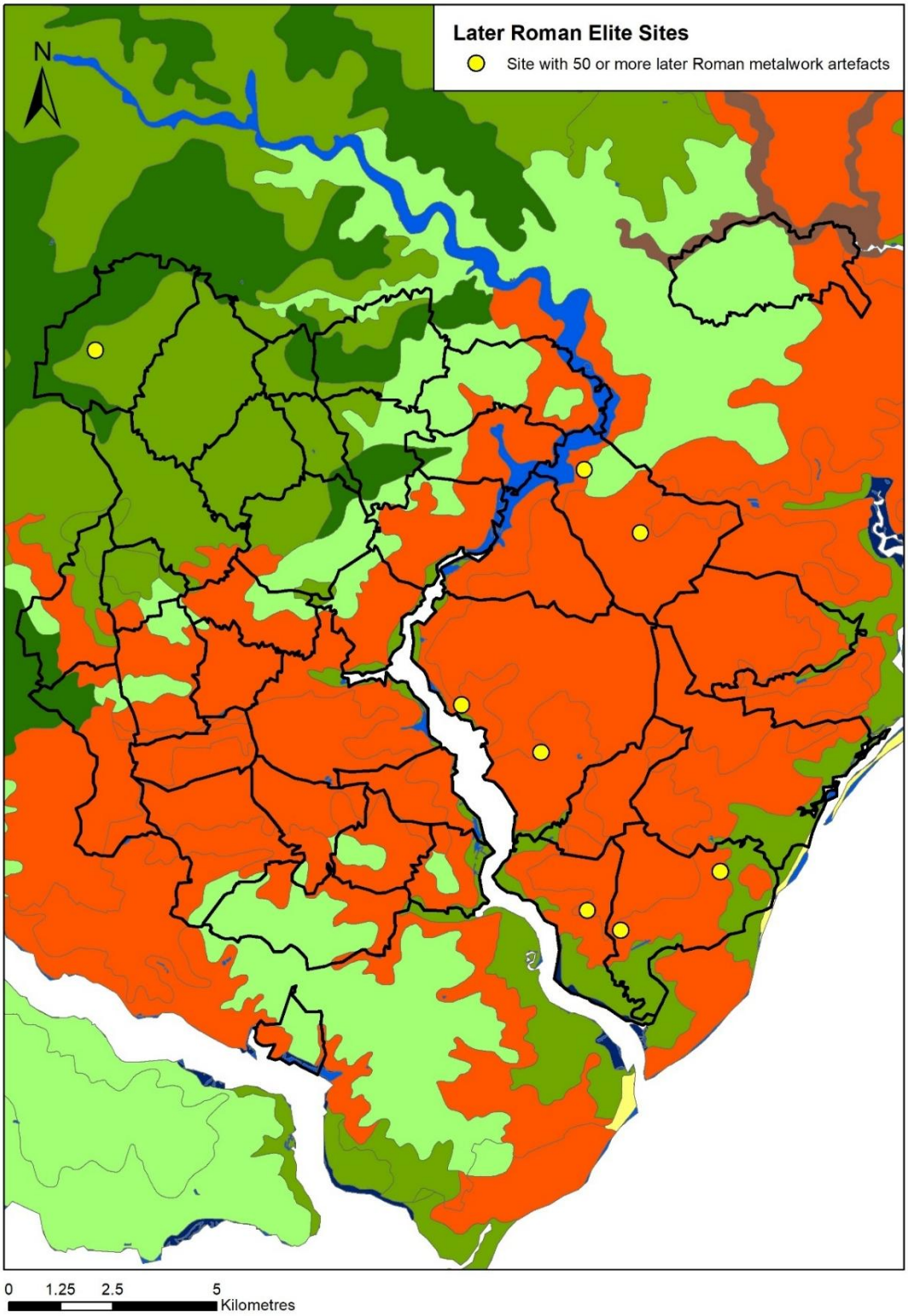

Figure 5.9: the distribution of scatters of metalwork comprised of 50 or more individual artefacts. There is a clear propensity for sites of greater wealth to be located in the Sandlings. The site in Otley is marked by 70 finds. Although clearly significant in a clayland context, the scatter is relatively minor compared to Sandling sites, which can be marked by many hundreds of artefacts. Source: PAS.

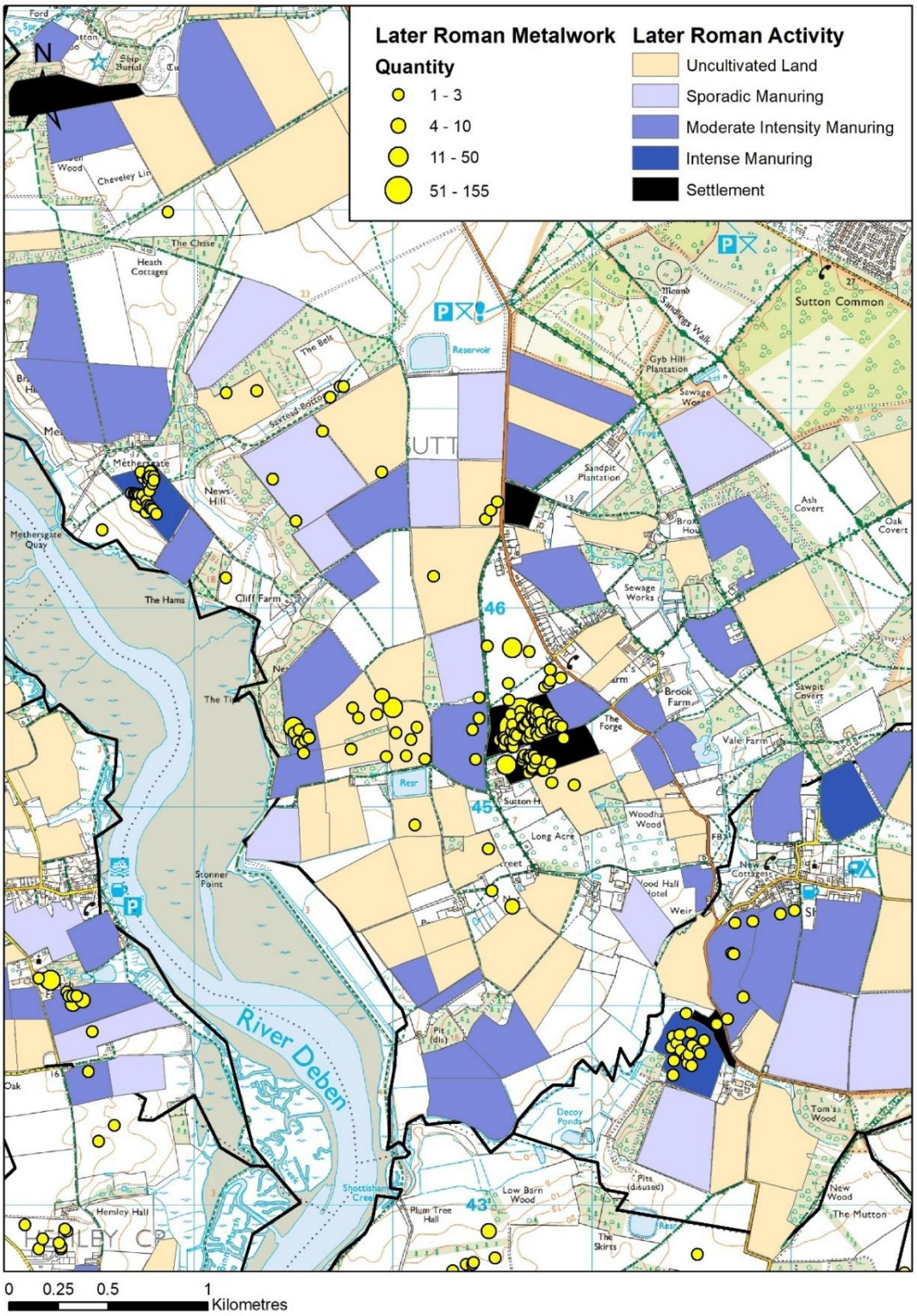

Figure 5.10: the distribution of metalwork in the area around Sutton. While many settlements are marked by large scatters of metalwork, this wealth was concentrated into relatively few hands. Many sites are only marked by limited scatters of metalwork or indeed none at all, suggesting that wealth was polarised in the Sandlings. Source: DVSA 19, 29, 31, 33 and 36, and PAS.

social differentiation may oversimplify many of the complexities of the countryside at a subregional level. The evidence from the ploughzone elucidates the nuances of later Roman society, particularly at the ranks below the villa owning elite.

Some have suggested that the emergence of these landed estates was rooted in the fourth century, the result of social, economic and administrative transformations in the region.[407] Yet, the evidence from the study area suggests that these patterns of social differentiation have much longer roots. Many of these wealthy sites in the Sandlings, such as those in Alderton, Ramsholt and Sutton, were apparently occupied in the first and second centuries. A number of these sites were also wealthy at an early date. The possible villa complex in Sutton, for example, is marked by a large scatter of metalwork, including a hoard of 204 *denarii*,[408] attesting a significant level of material wealth in the first century AD, while one of the major settlements in Alderton was apparently occupied by AD 70, again continuing as a site of importance into the fourth century. Rather than deriving from landscape reorganisation in the later Roman period, these subregional variations in settlement patterns and landholding structures clearly have much longer roots.

The Landscape Context of Later Roman Settlement

The later Roman settlement pattern of East Suffolk was largely riverine, particularly those major sites demarcated by significant scatters of metalwork, with farmsteads located both on the valley floor as well as on the margins of the plateau (Figure 5.11). Although occupying differing topographic positions, these settlements were able to exploit a range of resources located nearby in the muted terrain of East Suffolk. Such locations provided access to water, fish, reeds for thatch, valley floor grassland, fertile, easy to work arable soil on the valley slopes, as well as grazing resources on the uplands. Roman settlements in Grundisburgh, for example, could easily access alluvial valley floor soils that carried meadow and grassland, well-drained valley side soils suitable for arable farming, as well as poorly drained clay soils upon the plateau, carrying wood pasture and stands of trees. Differentiated environments clearly proved attractive to Romano-British settlers.

In the absence of excavation or geophysical survey, little can be said about the form of these occupation sites. The distribution of ploughzone pottery suggests, however, that

[407] Millett, '"By Small Things Revealed"', 706.
[408] Edward Martin et al., 'Archaeology in Suffolk 1987', *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History* 36 (1988): 319–20.

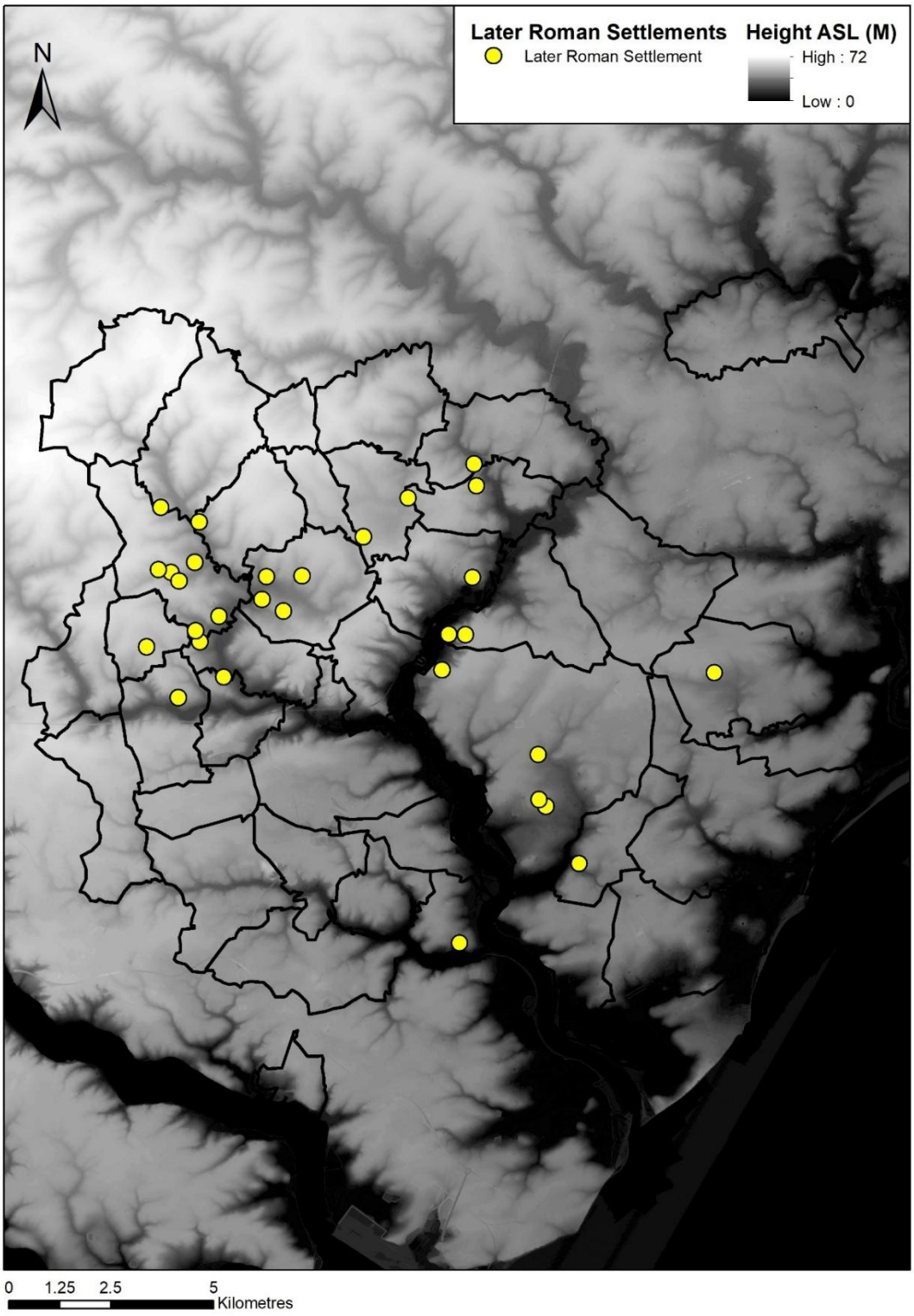

Figure 5.11: the distribution of later Roman settlement in the study area and its relationship with topography. While it is evident that settlements extended out from the river valleys onto the plateau on occasion, the settlement pattern of Roman East Suffolk was overwhelmingly riverine. Those settlements that extended out from the main river valleys were often huddled around streams, springs and patches of damp ground from which water could be drawn. Source: DVSA, 1-37.

this settlement pattern was largely dispersed, characterised by single or small groups of farmsteads scattered throughout the landscape, punctuated by larger settlements such as the small town at Hacheston.[409] There may, however, have been settlements situated between these extremes, with larger agglomerations evident, denoted by extensive, relatively dense scatters of pottery and metalwork that stretch across one or more fields; these nucleations appear to occur more frequently in areas of acid sand.

Subregional variations in settlement location are, however, evident in the study area. While the settlement pattern in the Sandlings was entirely riverine, with settlement concentrated in the valleys of major rivers such as the Deben or smaller streams and tributaries such as the Black Ditch, a small number of settlements in the claylands reached out from these riverine locations and lay scattered across the clay plateau in parishes such as Bredfield. Although the distinction between the valleys and interfluves in East Suffolk is relatively limited, owing to the muted topography of the region, it appears that these sites on the upland clay 'wolds' were relatively minor, 'secondary settlements'.[410] While these settlements situated upon the plateau were able to exploit a wide range of resources such as woodland and grazing, the ploughzone signature of such occupation sites is relatively slight, demarcated by small scatters of pottery and metalwork, implying that these minor dwellings may, perhaps, have been dependent upon or associated with the larger valley side settlements.

Indeed, it is plausible that these sites may have been engaged in specialised production, perhaps of livestock and timber, as suggested by settlement in Culpho (Figure 5.12). The site lies on the interfluve, overlooking the valley of the River Fynn. The settlement is denoted by a scatter of pottery but no metalwork, despite metal detecting having taken place in the surrounding area, implying that the site was minor, perhaps dependant on other, larger settlements in the valley below. The occupation site lies on the margins of an expanse of unploughed ground, marked by an absence of contemporary manuring scatters, at the centre of which lies Culpho Wood, an area of ancient woodland which, to judge from the lack of earthworks within the wood itself, appears never to have been under the plough. The relationship between the settlement and

[409] Thomas Blagg et al., *Excavations at a Large Romano-British Settlement at Hacheston, Suffolk, 1973–4*, no. 106 (East Anglian Archaeology, 2004).
[410] Warner, *Clayland Colonization*, 13.

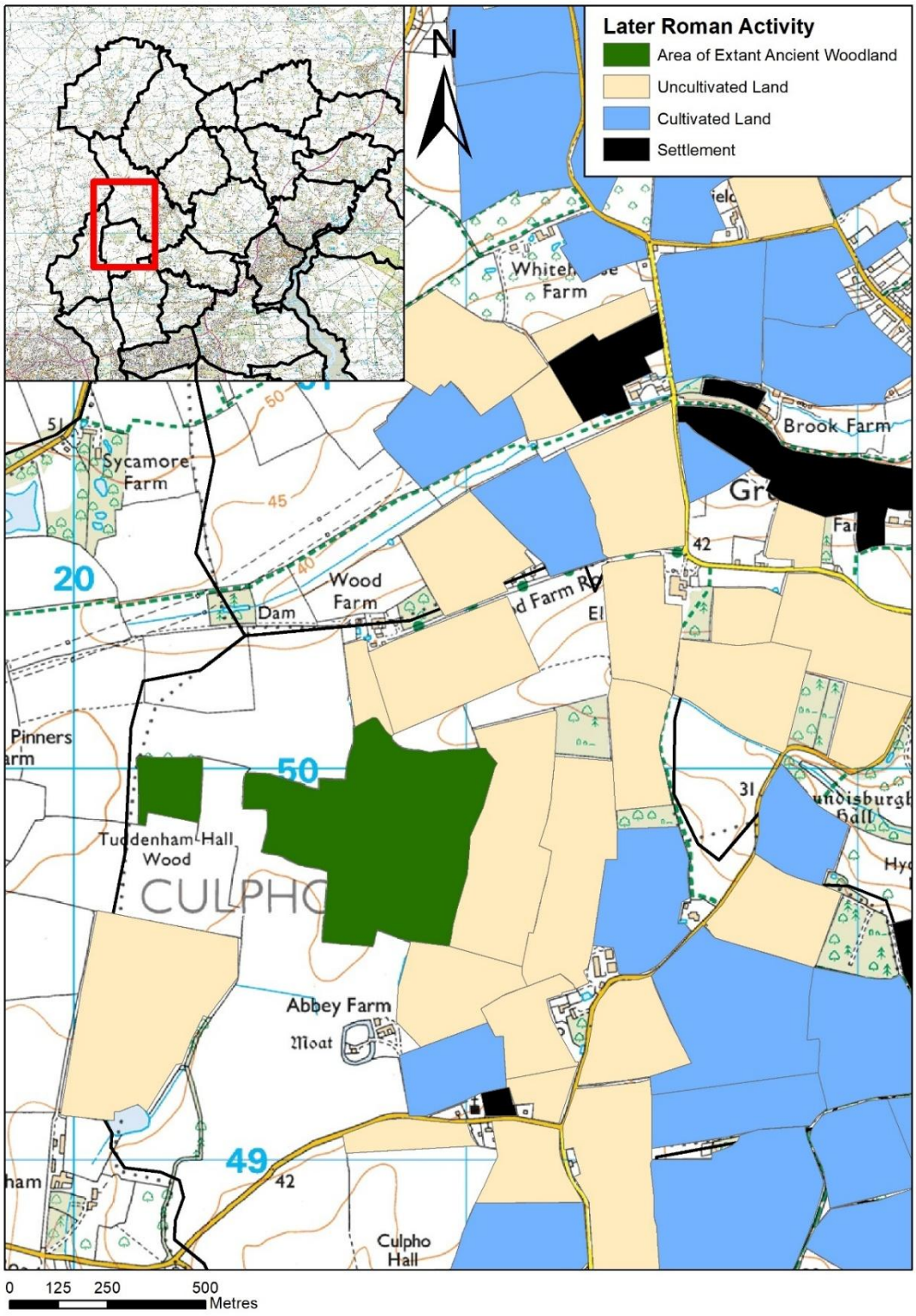

Figure 5.12: the later Roman landscape of Culpho. The settlement in Culpho lies on the margins of a large area of unploughed ground, likely carrying woodland, suggesting that the settlement may have engaged in specialised production of livestock and timber. Source: DVSA, 11, 17 and 34.

this area of woodland perhaps implies that this site was engaged in the management of woodland for firewood and timber, as well as for grazing, perhaps seasonally. As will be discussed below, the later Roman livestock economy of the claylands was characterised by the seasonal movement of cattle, grazed on upland pastures in the summer months before being driven to valley side settlements over winter. It is in this context that those minor settlements on the wolds may plausibly be understood.

Growth and Decline in the Later Roman Landscape

Although it has widely been suggested that the Romano-British countryside was densely settled, previous studies have been unable to discern whether these settlements were occupied simultaneously, owing to the reliance upon poorly dated pottery scatters to understand settlement patterns.[411] The methodology developed in Chapter Two allows, however, more accurate interpretation of patterns of settlement change in later Roman East Suffolk.

Of the 30 later Roman settlements demarcated by spreads of pottery in the study area, 7 are securely associated with scatters of metalwork, while others have spreads of material located in close proximity.[412] While the later Roman landscape has been viewed as somewhat static and unchanging,[413] these sites suggest a more complex picture of occupation and abandonment. Some settlements, such as the possible villa in Sutton, indeed appear long-lived and stable, with activity evident in the ploughzone from the first until the late fourth century and, on occasion, beyond. Similar patterns are apparent in Ufford, with occupation evident from the middle of the third century until AD 375 at the earliest, with settlement plausibly continuing until the last decade of the fourth century. Although the number of metalwork scatters clearly associated with dense spreads of pottery is relatively limited, many of those that are apparent are suggestive of settlement stability in the later Roman countryside.

Yet, other sites appear much more transient. The settlement in Hasketon, for example, was occupied for little more than 30 years in the middle of the fourth century, while the metalwork scatter in Dallinghoo also plausibly represents a settlement occupied from the first decade of the fourth century until c. AD 350. Such settlements suggest that, while much stability is indeed apparent, the trajectories taken by settlement in the study area are varied and complex. While many studies of the later Roman landscape of East Anglia, particularly those based upon the

[411] Davison, *South-East Norfolk*, 15–16.
[412] The following analysis is based upon the evidence of coinage.
[413] Warner, *Origins*, 38–59.

results of fieldwalking, have overlooked the complexities of past occupation, the methodology here employed posits a mixed picture of continuity and decline in the later Roman landscape.

While these patterns are best understood at a site-specific scale, there are important trends in the data that are worthy of comment. The chronology of coin loss may be used as a crude indicator of the levels of activity in the study area. Although the coin assemblage in the Sandlings is significantly larger than in the claylands, little variation in the relative frequency with which coins were lost between the Sandlings and the claylands is apparent, suggestive of similar patterns of occupation and abandonment between these regions (Figures 5.13 and 5.14). This congruence implies that the factors that underpinned settlement change in East Suffolk occurred at a scale greater than that of the present study. Importantly, those major sites, such as the large concentrations of material in Alderton, Sutton and Eyke appear most long-lived, perhaps due to the relative wealth of the owners enabling periods of dearth to be negotiated. These major sites also often occupy the most favourable environmental locations in the study area, with the fertility of the soils and richness of the environment perhaps further ensuring the long-term survival

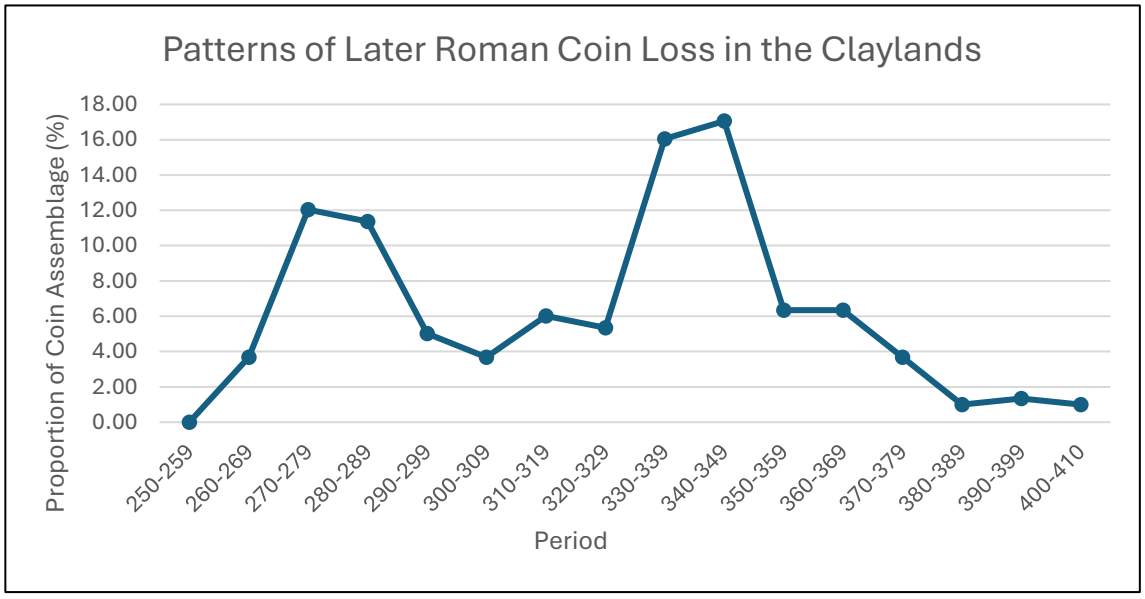

Figure 5.13: the patterns of coin loss in the claylands, drawn using later Roman coins from the PAS in the study area. It should be noted, however, that the sample from which this figure is drawn is relatively small (299 coins). Source: PAS.

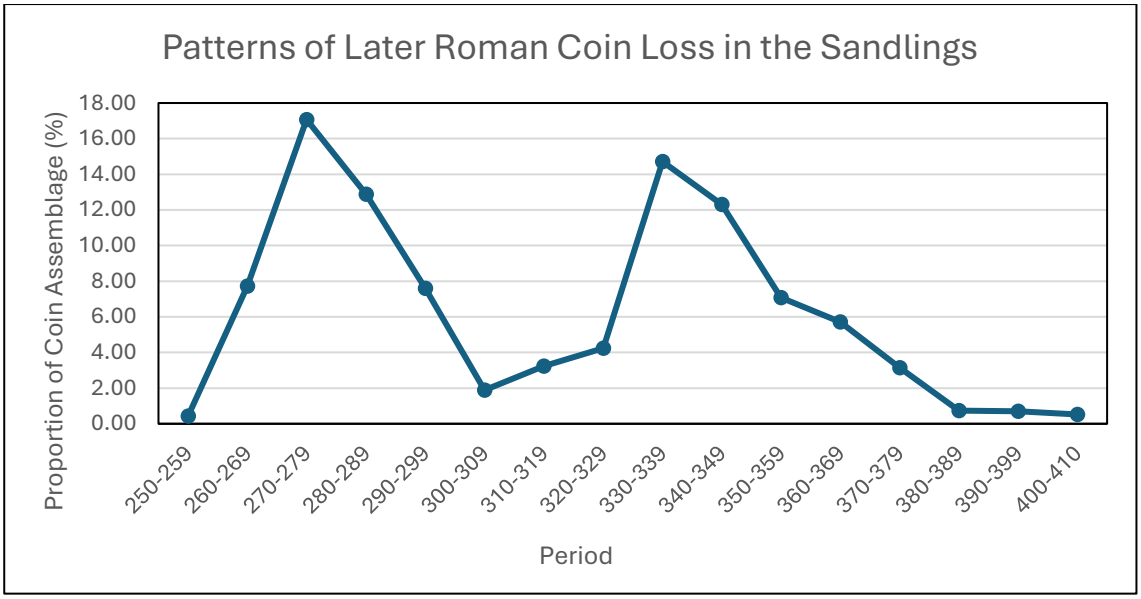

Figure 5.14: the patterns of coin loss in the Sandlings, drawn from an assemblage of 2290 later Roman coins from the PAS in the study area. Little variation in the loss of coins is apparent between the Sandlings and claylands is apparent. Source: PAS.

of occupation. Minor sites, especially those that occupy marginal locations, appear, on the other hand, more transient, often occupied for short periods before being abandoned, plausibly the result of the seasonal occupation of these settlements.

Such notions have important implications for understanding the overall density of settlement in East Suffolk. While settlement densities of approximately 1 settlement per 1.5 km^2 have been posited above, these complex patterns of settlement change suggests that this may be an overestimate of the scale of occupation. Although the limited association between dense pottery scatters and spreads of metalwork inhibits the close interpretation of patterns of settlement change, a sizeable proportion of these sites were not occupied simultaneously, implying that the scale of settlement and, therefore, population, in the later Roman landscape may have been overemphasised.

The Later Roman Arable Landscape

These dispersed settlements punctuated an extensively cultivated countryside, with at least 2,564 hectares of land under some form of cultivation in the later Roman period (Figure 5.15).[414] In both the Sandlings and the claylands, farmsteads stood among their fields, denoted by dense scatters of ploughzone material indicative of intensive

[414] This represents approximately 52% of the total fieldwalked area of 4971 hectares.

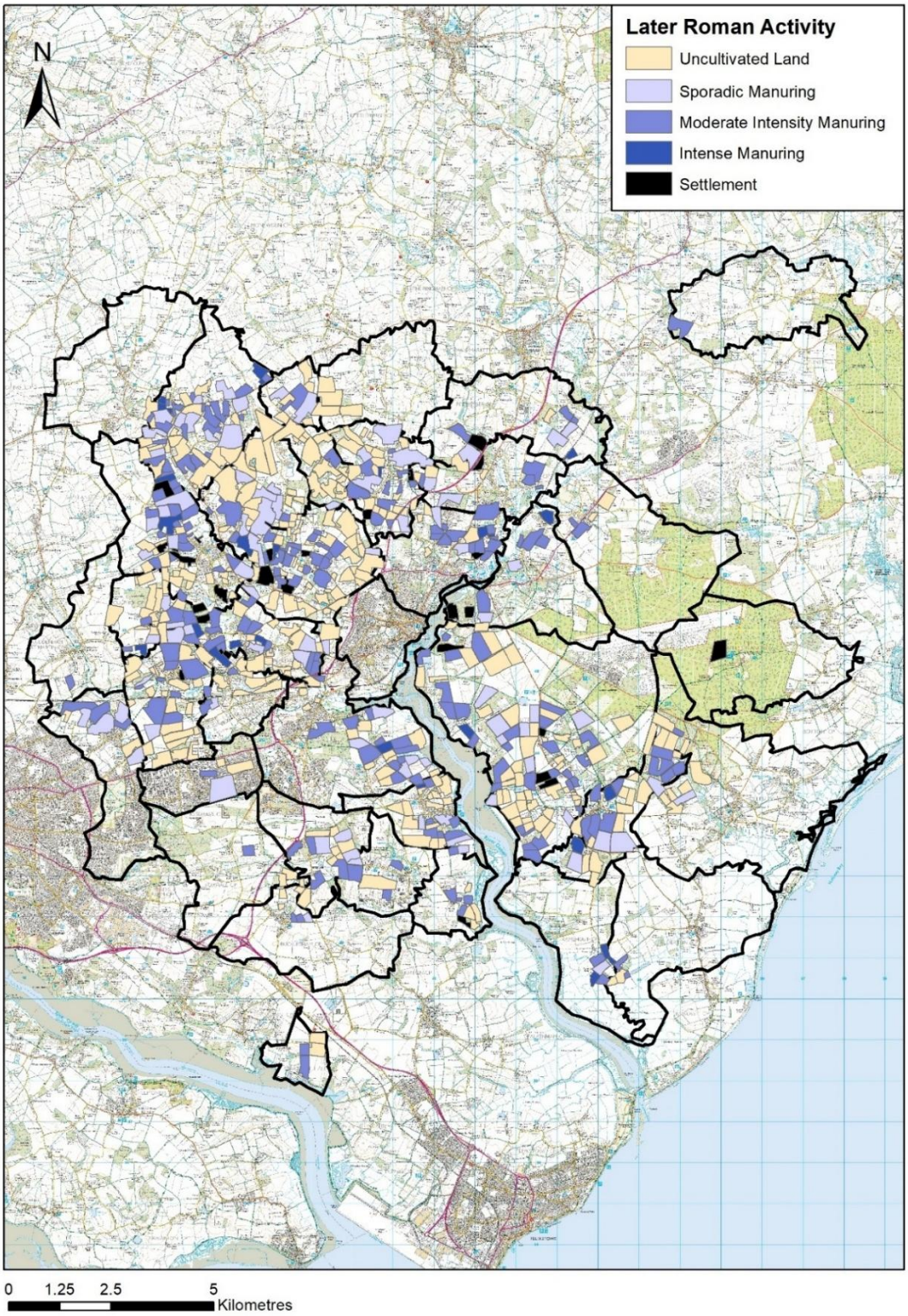

Figure 5.15: the later Roman agricultural landscape of the study area. It is evident that much of the landscape was cleared and cultivated; indeed, the total area under cultivation was likely larger than shown above, owing to the varying manuring strategies employed by Roman farmers that leave little trace in the landscape. The extent of cultivation should not, however, be overstated, and much uncultivated land could also be found in the landscape. Source: DVSA, 1-37.

cultivation that gradually declines as distance from the farmstead increases. It must be noted, however, that the extent of cultivation attested in the ploughzone is not coterminous with the total arable area. Many diverse manuring strategies were employed in the later Roman period, such as direct manuring by animals, many of which leave little trace in the archaeological record.[415] While the extent of pottery and metalwork manuring scatters indicates the minimum arable area, the total area cultivated and manured was likely considerably larger.

These manuring scatters imply the presence of an 'infield-outfield' system. Intensively cultivated and manured 'infields', denoted by dense scatters of pottery and metalwork sat alongside a larger area of sporadically cropped 'outfields' that were subject to long fallows, marked only by thin ploughzone scatters, the result of the sporadic manuring of land that was otherwise kept in good heart by the grazing of livestock during periodic fallows. These sporadically manured outfields represent the largest proportion of the area under the plough, with 46% of all land cultivated in later Roman East Suffolk managed in this way.

These manuring scatters have been described as 'halos', implying a degree of regularity in their form (Figure 5.16).[416] Yet, in the study area, much the opposite is apparent, with asymmetrical manuring scatters irregularly extending out into the landscape from settlement sites, avoiding some areas while evidently favouring others (Figure 5.17 and 5.18). Such patterns are worthy of further exploration. It is plausible that the asymmetrical nature of these manuring scatters results from contemporary landholding patterns, with land abutting the settlement owned by a distant site and, therefore, not manured using waste from the farmstead, remaining uncultivated or manured directly by livestock.

Such patterns may, however, also be the result of environmental factors. As noted in Chapter Four, the landscape and soils of East Suffolk vary widely; those areas of heavy or stony soils, for example, may have been passed over by cultivation, while infertile, acid sands were similarly left unploughed, likely employed as closes and paddocks for livestock (Figure 5.19). Indeed, the recovery of an animal bell from such an area in Sutton suggests the presence of these paddocks located on soils unsuited to arable cultivation adjacent to settlement sites.[417] It is, of course, possible that these areas were cultivated and were manured via strategies which have left no trace in the archaeological record. Such notions are, however, unlikely, particularly when it is considered that household manure was employed in adjacent fields. Cultivation and manuring

[415] Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella, *On Agriculture*, ed. and trans. Harrison Boyd Ash (Harvard University Press, 1945), 1:192–97.
[416] Gaffney and Tingle, *Maddle Farm*, 241.
[417] PAS SF-C1F282

did not take place in an undifferentiated environment, something to which early farmers displayed apparent sensitivity. The asymmetrical nature of manuring scatters is a function of the varied environmental conditions in which agriculture took place.

Much of this cultivation took place on the slopes of valleys adjacent to settlement sites (Figure 5.20). Such patterns are, again, likely structured by the environment, with these riverine locations giving access to the most fertile and well-drained soils in the area. As these areas lay near to settlement sites, these valley-side fields received greater quantities of midden manure, rendering these areas more visible in the archaeological record.

Later Roman arable cultivation also extended into the uplands, however (Figure 5.21). Although cultivation upon the plateau can be found in the Sandlings, the cropping of the uplands is much more prevalent in the claylands, likely, once again, the result of variations in soil fertility. The uplands in the Sandlings, dominated by infertile Newport 4 soils, are ill-suited to the production of grain crops, while the clay-covered interfluves, although difficult to work, are inherently fertile, producing relatively high yields of cereal crops. Such upland landscapes were, in the claylands, therefore, cultivated to produce grain crops, perhaps to be sold at local market centres to meet the demands of imperial taxation. Many of these upland landscapes were often cultivated as outfields, sporadically cropped before being left to lay fallow.

Later Roman Livestock Farming

The extent of the later Roman arable area should not, however, be overstated. The landscape of arable fields was punctuated by expanses of unploughed ground, with some 53% of the landscape uncultivated, marked by no ploughzone manuring scatters, although the possibility these areas were cultivated and manured directly must be considered. These unploughed landscapes were, in the claylands, occupied by pasture and woodland, while in the Sandlings such areas carried stands of trees, open heath and scrub.[418] While much of this uncultivated land was scattered across the upland 'wolds', areas of unploughed ground also extended into river

[418] Large quantities of oak charcoal and hazelnut shells have been identified in later Roman archaeological deposits from the Sandlings, implying the presence of woodland. Heathland plants such as brome have similarly been recovered from excavated features. See Samara King, *Archaeological Excavations at Woods Lane, Melton, Suffolk. Post-excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design*, Unpublished Report (Archaeology South-East, 2018), 91–96. The claylands of High Suffolk, albeit beyond the study area, are well represented in paleoenvironmental samples, which demonstrate the presence of woodland as well as rough grazing. See S. M. Peglar et al., 'Vegetation and Land-Use History at Diss, Norfolk, U.K.', *The Journal of Ecology* 77 (1989): 203; Rippon et al., *Fields of Britannia*, 169–75.

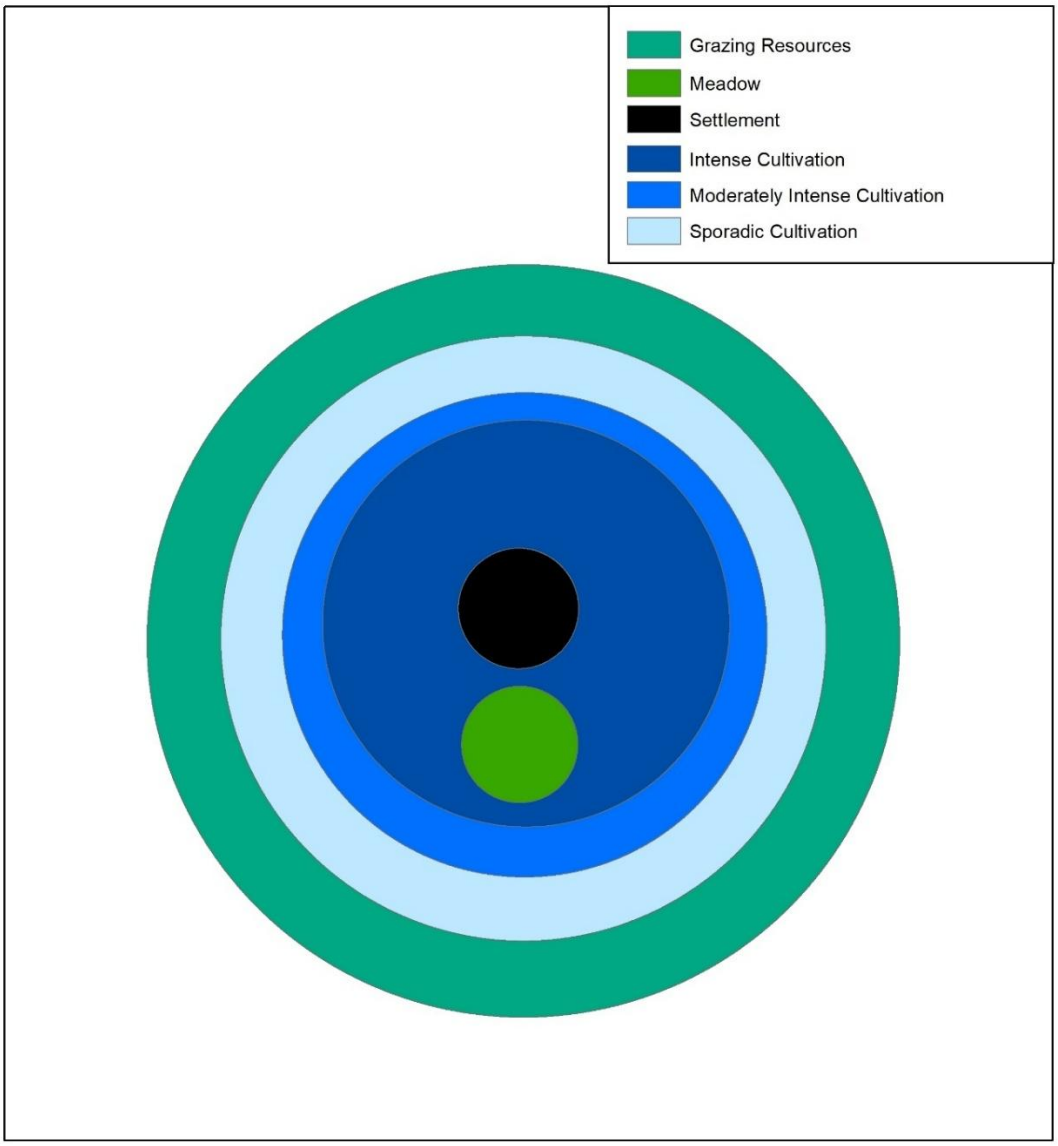

Figure 5.16: a model of agriculture in the Roman period based on the arguments of Davison and Rogerson. The scatters of pottery indicative of manuring are often described as 'halos', implying regularity in form, radiating out from occupation sites in decreasing densities as distance from the settlement site increases. It is often suggested that, far from occupation, lay grazing resources, characterised by heathland in the Sandlings and wood pasture in the claylands of High Suffolk (after Davison 1990 and Rogerson 2022).

Although there are many benefits to such models of Roman settlement, it is clear that the development of settlement and agriculture in Roman Suffolk, and England more widely, was the result of a complex and nuanced relationship between the natural landscape and those working the land. The development of agriculture does not conform to any single model and was, instead, mediated through the influence of the natural environment.

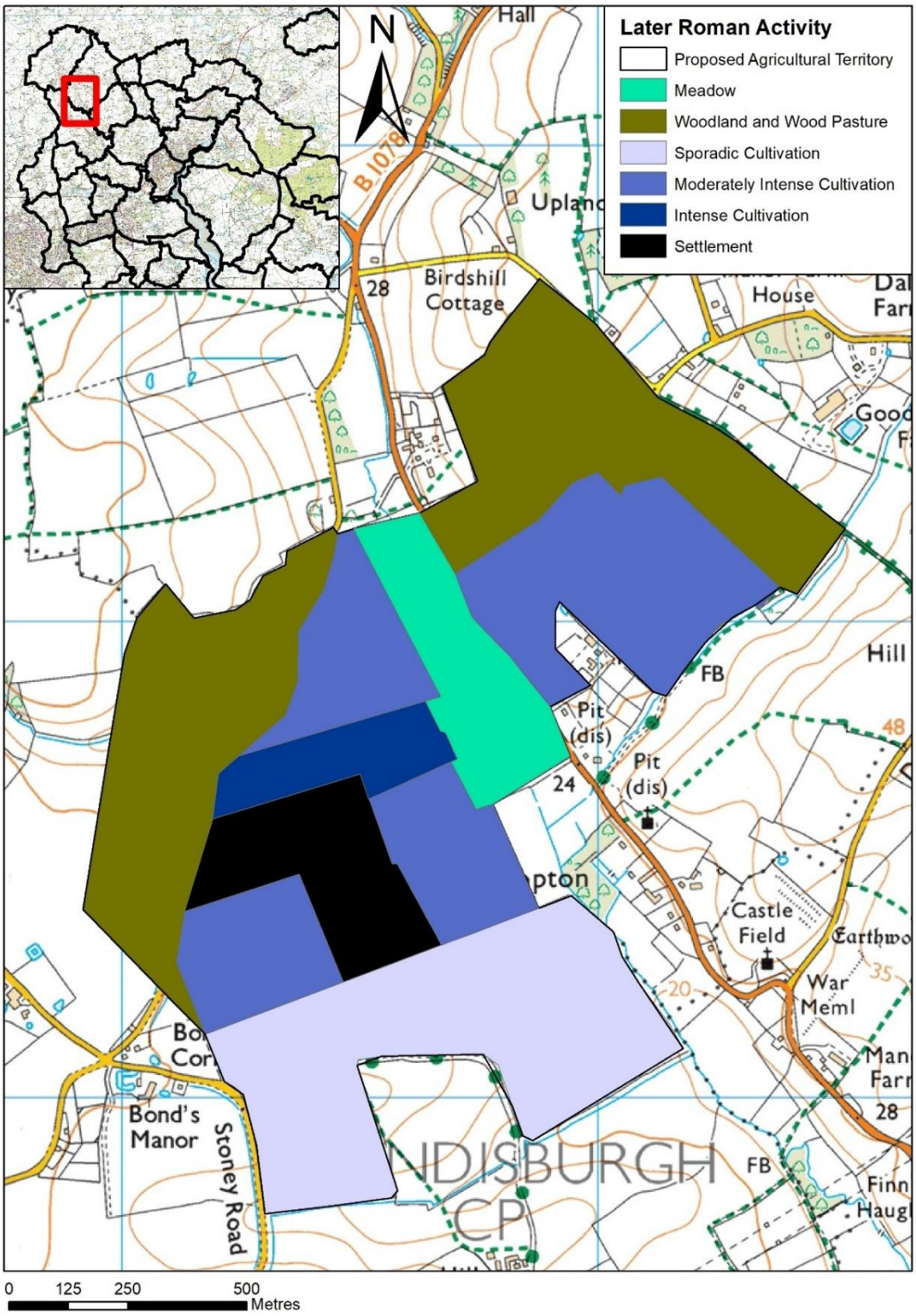

Figure 5.17: The proposed agricultural territory of a single later Roman settlement in Clopton, based upon scatters of pottery and metalwork from the plough soil. The agricultural landscape cultivated from this settlement does not conform to the idealised model set out in Figure 5.16 and, instead, extends asymmetrically from the occupation site. Those areas lying close to settlement that are uncultivated are characterised by waterlogged alluvial soils that were likely managed as meadow, as well as heavy clays that were difficult to cultivate. Source: DVSA 8, 10 and 17.

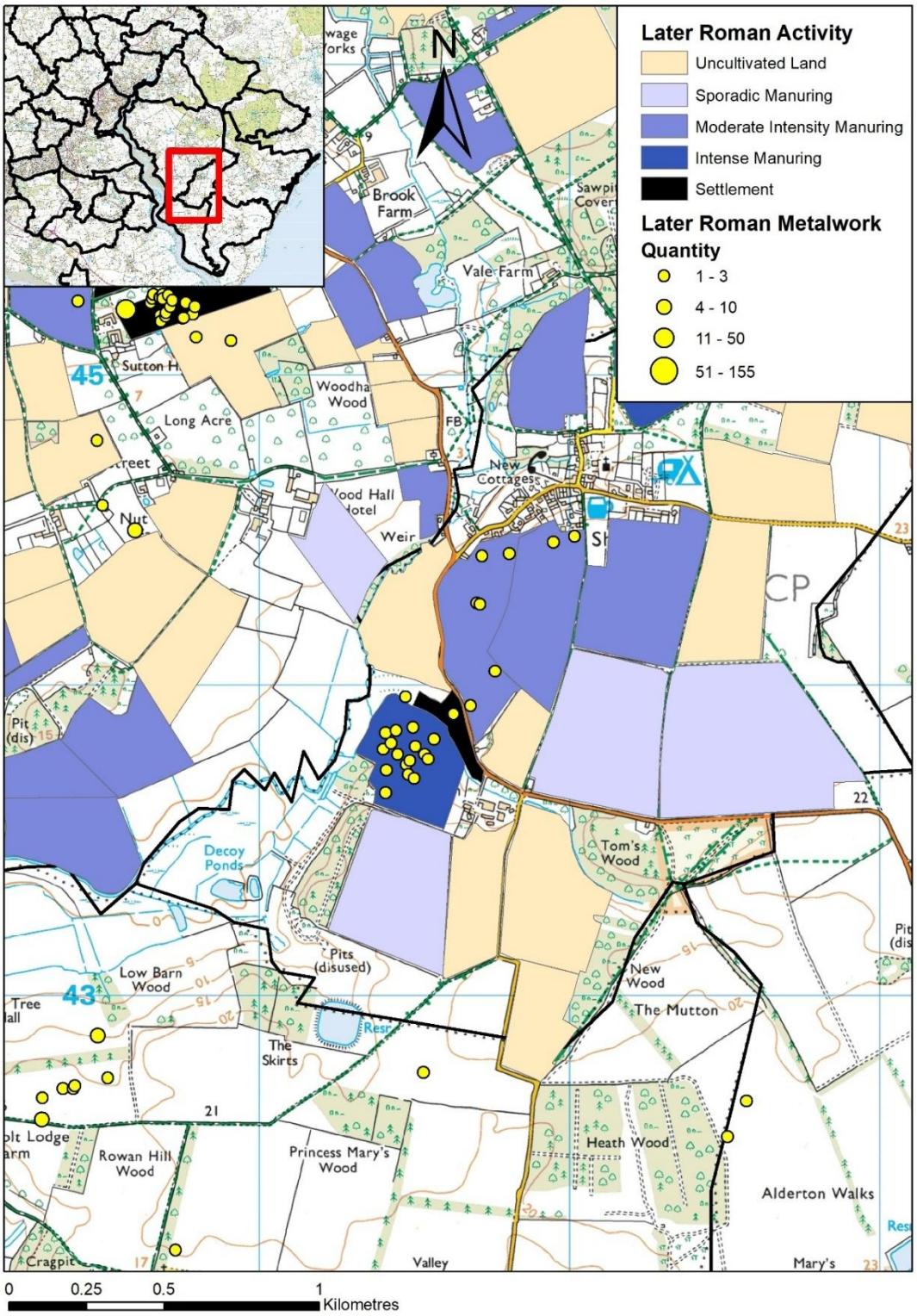

Figure 5.18: The distribution of metalwork in the arable landscape of Shottisham. It is clear that metalwork manuring scatters are also asymmetrical. Source: DVSA 1, 20, 29, 31 and 33, and PAS.

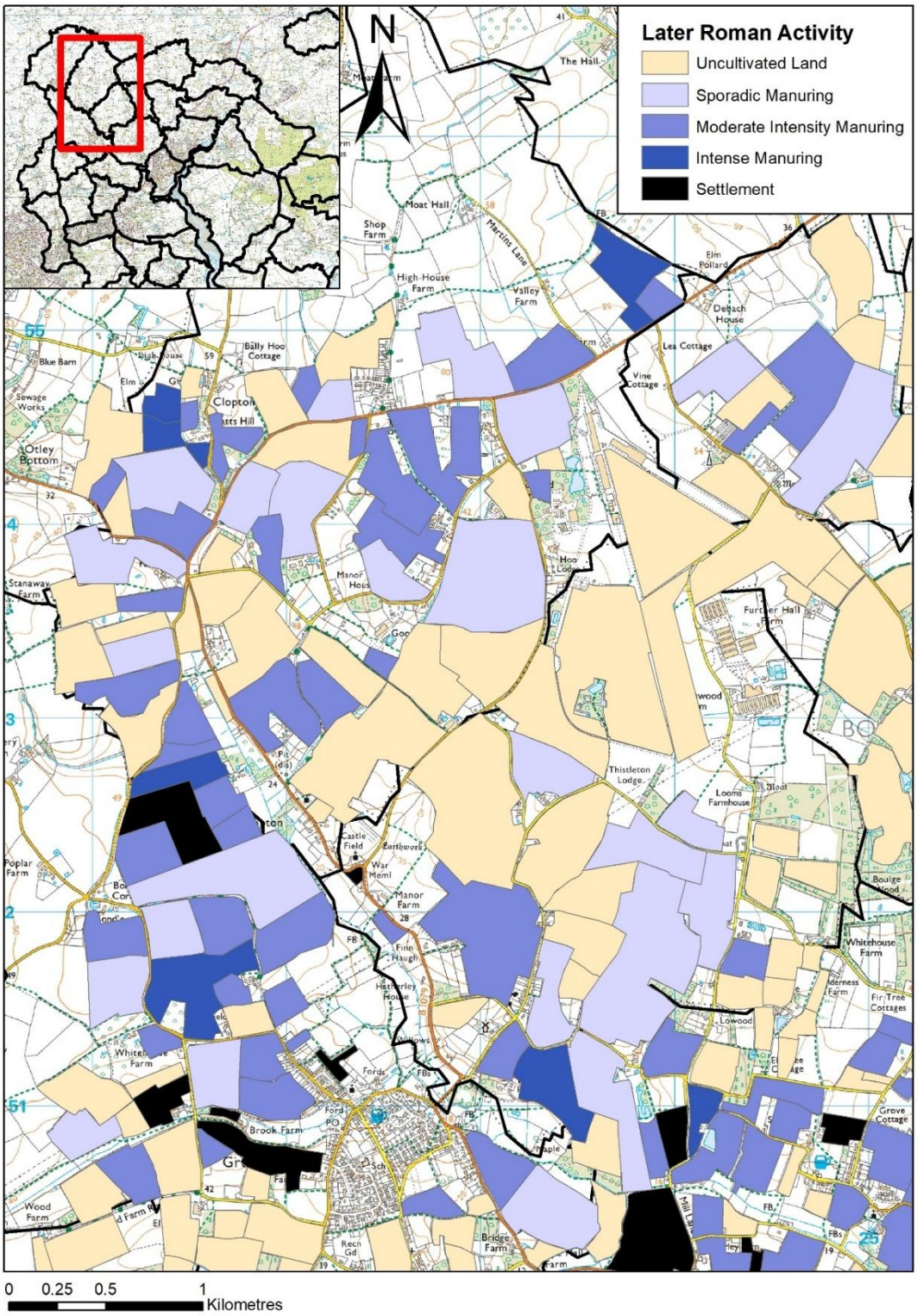

Figure 5.19: the extent of manuring in the landscape surrounding Grundisburgh during the later Roman period. Although it has been suggested that cultivation extended uniformly from settlements in the Roman period, it is clear that the extent and nature of cultivation was a response to local environmental and topographic circumstances. Source: DVSA 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18 and 26.

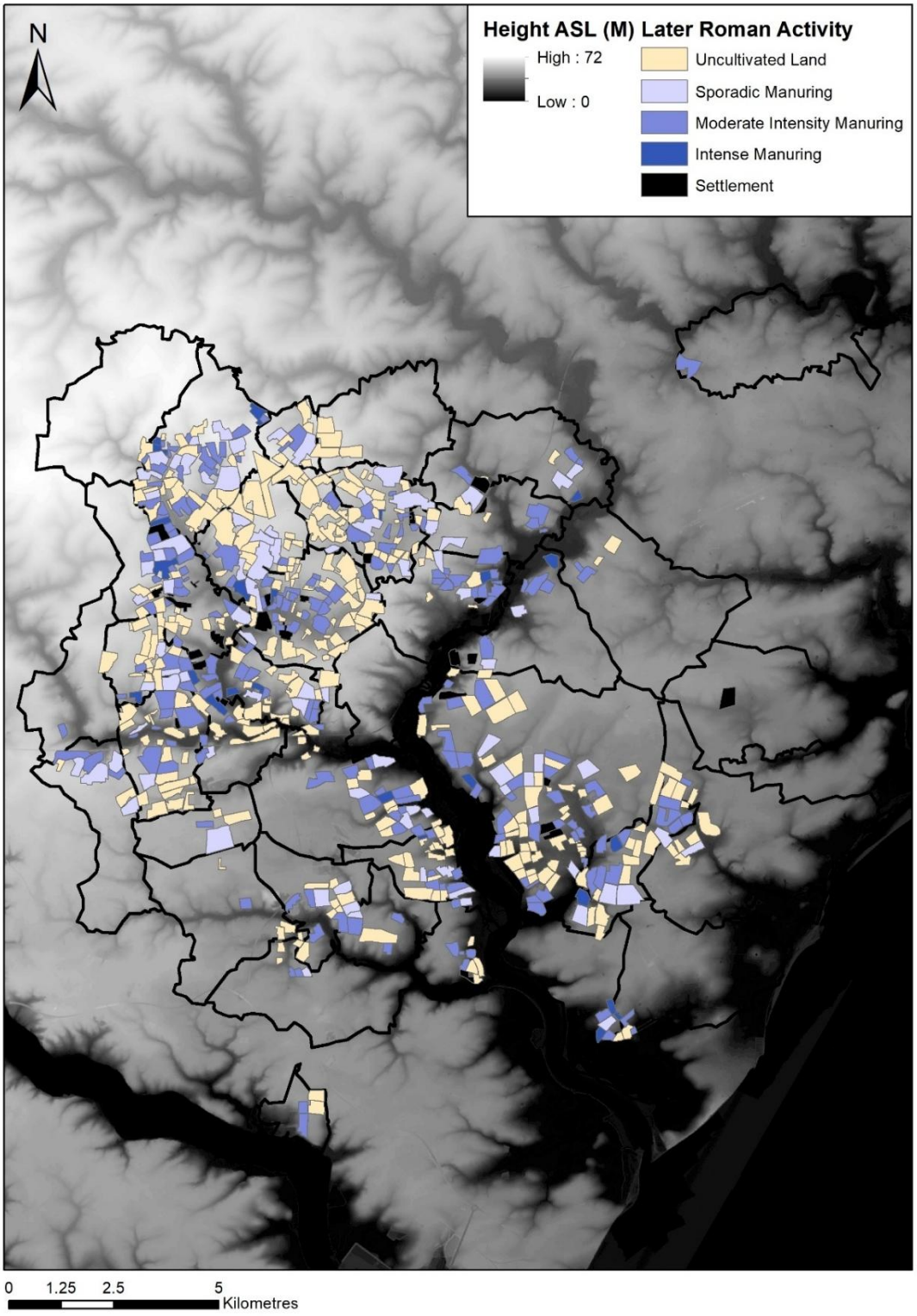

Figure 5.20: The distribution of later Roman cultivation and its relationship with topography. Agriculture evidently extends from the river valleys in which settlement was often located on to the plateau. Much uncultivated land could, however, be found in the landscape, carrying heathland in the Sandlings and wood pasture in the claylands. Such grazing landscapes were central to the rural economy of Roman Suffolk. Source: DVSA, 1-37.

Figure 5.21: the level interfluves in Hasketon. Much of this upland landscape was under the plough in the later Roman period.

Figure 5.22: later Roman personal possessions recorded with the PAS from the interfluves. Left – SF-54624A copper alloy later Roman pin. Right – SF-D41C85 copper alloy later Roman pin. Images not to scale.

valleys; such areas likely remained uncultivated due to their distance from contemporary settlements.

These areas of woodland and wood pasture were central to the rural economy, providing both fuel and timber, while the grazing opportunities offered by this uncultivated land were critical

to, and, to a large degree, shaped, the farming systems of later Roman East Suffolk. The exploitation of these areas of rough grazing and woodland is implied by those small upland settlements of the claylands, as well as the recovery of thin spreads of metalwork, particularly personal possessions such as pins and strap fittings, from the interfluves in both the Sandlings and High Suffolk, with these spreads of material the residue of livestock management (Figures 5.22 and 5.23).[419]

Up to this point, it has been implied that the agricultural systems of the claylands and the Sandlings were largely congruent, with both countrysides settled, cleared and cultivated, a landscape in which dwellings punctuated river valleys, surrounded by intensely cropped fields, themselves situated amongst pasture and sporadically cultivated outfields. Stands of woodland could be found in each of these subregions, while open heaths also dotted the landscape of the Sandlings. Yet, for all the similarities between these two countrysides, clear differences come into focus, differences that define the development of agriculture for the next millennium, persisting through conquest, demographic change, and agricultural innovation.

While the total area of cultivation was larger in the Sandlings, partly the result of the greater area surveyed in this region, the density of clayland manuring scatters is significantly greater than in areas lying to the east, with, for example, areas of intensive manuring some 10% larger in parishes dominated by clay than sand, while the total area of intense and moderately intense manuring is also greater in the claylands (Figure 5.24). Such a pattern is puzzling, especially when it is considered that the soils of the claylands were substantially more fertile than their Sandlings counterparts and may, therefore, have required less frequent manuring. This pattern may plausibly have been underpinned by previously unrecognised subregional variations in landscape exploitation.

While the claylands were intensively cultivated, these arable fields punctuated a landscape of grassland, wood pasture and riverine meadows.[420] The valley floors in the region carried lush pastures, while the uplands were a landscape of rich wood pasture, punctuated by more dense stands of trees. Such environments are inherently suited to the farming of cattle, providing expanses of grazing that could sustain significant herds, while the damp pastures and numerous watercourses of the area ensured these herds were sufficiently watered. These cattle were turned out onto the uplands during the summer months, a husbandry system attested by the minor settlements upon the interfluves discussed above, perhaps equivalent to later shielings,

[419] See, for example, PAS SF-807ED7 and SF-D41C85.
[420] Rippon et al., *Fields of Britannia*, 169–75.

as well as thin spreads of personal possessions scattered across the interfluves. During the winter months, these cattle were driven to valley side settlements and stalled in barns and yards, fed on the fodder and 'leafy hay' provided by riverine meadows, hedges and woodland, the exploitation of which is attested by contemporary agricultural writers.[421] This periodic stalling of cattle is attested by excavated cattle sheds and byres, such as at Spoonley Wood, Gloucestershire and Rayne, Essex, as well as by Roman agricultural writers such as Columella.[422] Although sheep could be, and indeed were, maintained in these clayland landscapes, the folding of large flocks can damage the structure of heavy clay soils, while these waterlogged soils can cause foot rot and liver flukes; as such, cattle were predominant.

When such cattle were stalled in barns and yards, their waste was collected and stored in dung heaps that were subsequently spread throughout the arable landscape to restore fertility.[423] It was during this process that animal waste became mixed with household refuse, incorporating large quantities of pottery and metalwork from domestic sites. Such an agrarian system is, therefore, denoted by extensive and intense ploughzone manuring scatters, reflecting the large quantities of manure from stalled cattle mixed with midden material that was spread on arable fields to maintain fertility.

The landscape of the Sandlings, on the other hand, was punctuated by woodland and heaths. While the river valleys were characterised by numerous marshes, meadows and in some areas, fens, areas of heath and scrub were widely scattered across the interfluves. This was quintessential sheep country, with large flocks grazed on the heaths by day and folded on the arable fields and fallows at night. In this system, the heaths acted as a 'nutrient reservoir', with the movement of sheep grazed on the heath to the arable land 'ensuring the flow of nutrients from one to the other'.[424] These scrubs and heaths continued to shoot throughout the winter, providing sustenance to sheep even during the coldest months. This longevity of grazing eliminated the need for sheep to be moved to barns and yards during the winter.

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[421] Andrew Margetts, *The Wandering Herd: The Medieval Cattle Economy of South-East England C. 450-1450* (Windgather Press, 2021), 218.
[422] Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella, *On Agriculture*, ed. and trans. Harrison Boyd Ash (Harvard University Press, 1941), 2:137.
[423] Columella, *On Agriculture*, 1:197–201.
[424] Williamson, *Sandlands*, 57.

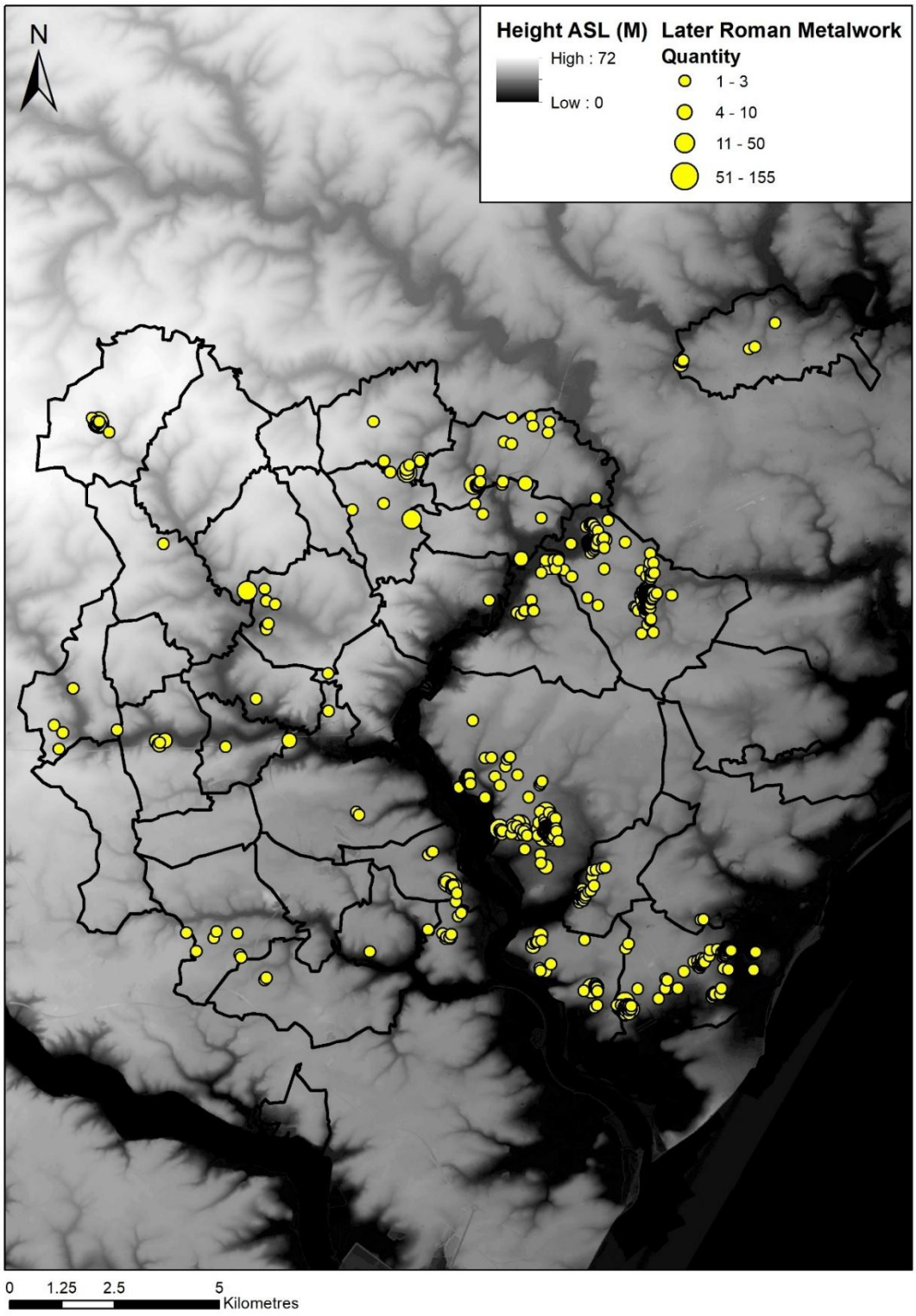

Figure 5.23: the distribution of later Roman metalwork in the study area and its association with the topography of the study area. The loose scatters of metalwork recovered from the interfluves are the residue of the management of livestock on areas of unploughed ground. Source: DVSA, 1-37 and PAS.

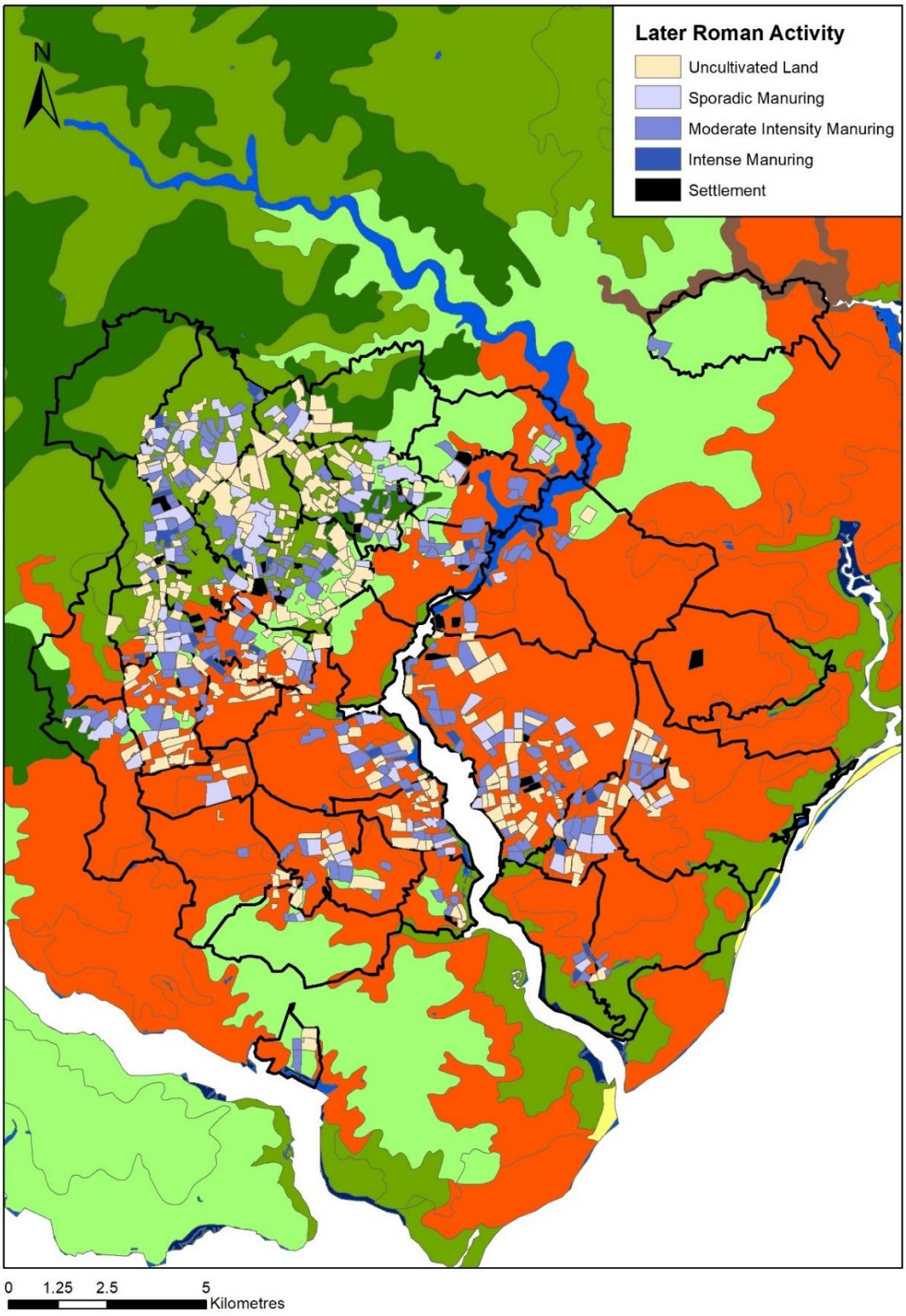

Figure 5.24: the extent of later Roman cultivation and its varying relationship with the dominant soils of the region. Clear variations in the manuring patterns between the different soils of the region are evident. Source: DVSA, 1-37.

As this manure was directly applied to arable land, rather than laying in heaps surrounding farmsteads and barns, there were fewer opportunities for pottery and metalwork to become incorporated.[425] Hence, while manure was assiduously applied in the Sandlings, perhaps even more so than the claylands owing to the relative infertility of the local soils, it was applied directly to the fields, leaving few intense manuring scatters in the ploughzone. This is not to deny that material from stalls, yards and middens was applied to arable fields in the Sandlings; the countless manuring scatters attest the use of this material. Rather, farmyard manure formed only a secondary manuring strategy in the Sandlings, with the vast majority of manure applied directly by livestock.

Such livestock husbandry systems are reflected in ploughzone assemblages from each of these subregions. The presence of numerous minor settlements situated atop the plateaux in the claylands has been noted above; it is in the context of this cattle centred agricultural system that these sites should be seen. With cattle moved seasonally, small settlements, demarcated by spreads of pottery but only limited quantities of metalwork, were constructed on the interfluves to provide shelter for those managing herds of cattle. Owing to the seasonal occupation of these sites, as well as, perhaps, the limited wealth carried to such outlying settlements, the ploughzone signature of such cattle rearing sites are slight. Similar minor settlements scattered across the clay interfluves have been noted elsewhere.[426] Interestingly, despite the only seasonal use of such settlements, small areas of cultivation surrounded these sites. While this can, perhaps, be employed as evidence against the seasonal occupation of these sites, these manuring scatters are both thinner and more spatially limited than their valley side counterparts and may, instead, reflect small-scale horticulture, perhaps the cultivation of vegetables or barley for sustenance, with limited quantities of household waste from these minor sites spread on garden plots to maintain fertility.

These patterns of interfluve exploitation in the Sandlings are also demarcated in the metalwork assemblages recovered from the interfluves. While spreads of metalwork have been recovered from both subregions, representing losses made while managing herds of livestock, these scatters are both larger and more numerous in the Sandlings. One such example lies to the north of Alderton, recovered from an area that was, in the nineteenth century, characterised by heathland and rough grazing. A limited spread of third-and-fourth-century personal possessions have been recovered from the area, a scatter akin to other plateau top assemblages in the

[425] Jones, 'Signatures', 184.
[426] Williamson, 'Settlement in North-West Essex', 124–25.

Sandlings, such as in Bucklesham and Brightwell.[427] The quantity and relative abundance of these scatters in areas of acid sand plausibly reflects the frequency with which animals were moved in the Sandlings. While in the claylands, cattle were driven to and from the uplands seasonally, the sheep of the Sandlings were moved daily. Such frequent movement presented greater opportunities for material to be lost, becoming incorporated into ploughzone assemblages; it is this, therefore, that may account for the greater quantity of metalwork recovered from the plateau in the Sandlings.

Larger quantities of pottery were also recovered from Sandlings settlement sites compared to their clayland counterparts, plausibly the result of the varied manuring strategies laid out above. Household waste was more thoroughly removed from settlement sites for use as manure in the claylands, while the use of midden material as manure was secondary to direct manuring in the Sandlings. Hence, greater quantities of household refuse remained in settlement sites in the Sandlings to be recovered by fieldwalking, while, in the claylands, midden material was more likely to be included in manure and, therefore, removed from the yards surrounding farmsteads.[428] While household refuse was indeed employed to return fertility to intensively cultivated land in the Sandlings, this was secondary to direct manuring, leaving larger quantities of material in settlement sites.

The End of Roman East Suffolk

The decline and eventual collapse of Roman administration in fourth-and-fifth century Britain has been the subject of much debate. While some have suggested that the period was marked by widespread retraction, others have argued that the pace of change was more gradual, although it is usually accepted that the locus of change was in the fifth century.[429] As Simon Esmonde-Cleary has suggested, the fifth century apparently witnessed 'one of the most marked 'mass extinctions' in the archaeological record of Britain.[430]

[427] See, for example, PAS SF-491826.
[428] Jones and Hooke, 'Methodological Approaches', 39.
[429] Gerrard, *Ruin*.
[430] Simon Esmonde Cleary, 'The Ending(s) of Roman Britain', in *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, ed. David A. Hinton et al. (Oxford University Press, 2011), 13.

The widely acknowledged decline of settlement in the fifth century is apparent in the study area (see Chapter Six). Yet, the methodology developed in Chapter Two implies a more complex process of settlement retrenchment, the roots of which may be found in the later fourth century. While the archaeological signature of the first seven decades of the fourth century is characterised by widely distributed metalwork scatters, metalwork dating from the period AD 370-410 has a much more restricted distribution.

Figure 5.25: Late Roman metalwork recorded with the PAS in the study area. Left – SF-45FCC4 copper alloy amphora-shaped strap end. Right –SF-1E0CD6 silver siliqua of Honorius. Images not to scale.

Patterns of coin loss in the later fourth century may be employed as a crude indicator of this decline in activity (Figures 5.13 and 5.14). A sizeable collapse in the number of coins recovered, and arguably, therefore, activity in the countryside, is apparent, although it is important to note that this represents a relative decline, rather than the wholesale abandonment of the landscape.[431] This late fourth-and-early-fifth-century material is largely restricted to those major sites in river valleys, with many outlying settlements apparently abandoned, suggesting that some degree of settlement retrenchment, as well as the abandonment of the most agriculturally marginal soils in the district, may have occurred in the later fourth century, rather than the fifth (Figures 5.26 and 5.27). Indeed, some of this metalwork likely derives from the post-Roman reuse of earlier material, suggesting that the decline of settlement in the late fourth century may have been more marked than the data suggests. The settlement pattern of the decades preceding AD 400 appears a truncated version of the mid-fourth century pattern, with significant levels of abandonment apparent. Although the importance of the fifth century in the

[431] The supply of coinage in Late Roman Britain was, however, somewhat intermittent. See Philippa Walton and Sam Moorhead, 'Coinage and the Economy', in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Britain*, ed. Martin Millett et al. (Oxford University Press, 2016), 844–45.

transformation of the landscape must be noted, the decline of settlements in the later fourth century implies that the fifth century witnessed the acceleration of pre-existing trends of abandonment.

That some degree of retrenchment occurred in the later fourth century is attested by the decline of the numerous small towns of East Anglia. Although no small town lies within the study area, it is worthwhile to briefly explore the fate of these economic and cultural centres. While the continued importance of small towns in influencing the emergence of subregional lordships has been asserted,[432] many of these towns were abandoned before the turn of the fifth century. Perhaps most relevant to the present study is the case of nearby Hacheston. The site underwent a 'dramatic decline in coin loss' in the third quarter of the fourth century, suggesting that the town may have been abandoned before the turn of the fifth century.[433] Similar patterns are apparent at small towns such as Scole and Wenhaston.[434] The decline and eventual abandonment of these small towns further suggests that the beginnings of some of the marked changes evident in the archaeological record traditionally assigned to the fifth century, particularly in the settlement pattern, may have roots in the later fourth. While Gerrard has argued that the fourth century was marked by widespread stability, much the opposite is apparent in the last decades of the century in East Suffolk.[435]

The factors underpinning this retrenchment of settlement are obscure. This decline in coin loss represents a significant deviation from both the regional and national pattern;[436] indeed, the decline of settlement laid out above did not occur in relatively nearby areas, such as Northwest Essex, suggesting that the factors underpinning this settlement change may have been local rather than regional or national. [437] It is tempting to associate this decline in activity with the raiding of coastal regions by Barbarian tribes. Although such suggestions remain speculative, the establishment of the coastal fortress at Walton implies that such raiding was a problem in the area. The small group of Late Roman coins from Playford, not associated with settlement or manuring, may represent a dispersed hoard buried at this time of social upheaval.[438] The threat

[432] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 404–5.
[433] Blagg et al., *Hacheston*, 197.
[434] Trevor Ashwin and Andrew Tester, *A Roman Settlement in the Waveney Valley: Excavations at Scole 1993–4*, no. 152 (East Anglian Archaeology, 2014); Graeme Clarke, 'Roman Wenhaston "Springs" into Life', *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History* 45 (2021): 19–43.
[435] Gerrard, *Ruin*, 247–49.
[436] Philippa Walton, *Rethinking Roman Britain: Coinage and Archaeology* (Moneta, 2012), 31.
[437] Williamson, 'The Roman Countryside', 226.
[438] Other contemporary coin hoards from East Suffolk, such as PAS SF-7E2A03, may be similarly interpreted.

of Barbarian raids may have resulted in the abandonment of outlying areas of the landscape, with settlement coalescing for greater protection.

Significantly, this settlement retrenchment was coterminous with apparent transformations in agriculture. While later Roman metalwork clearly entered arable fields with manure, little post-370 material appears to have entered the arable landscape (Figure 5.28).[439] This lack of metalwork manuring evidence may reflect some degree of arable retraction, possibly including the complete abandonment of cultivation in marginal landscapes. Such a pattern is most marked in the claylands, with the intractable and waterlogged soils of the interfluves largely abandoned.[440] Although the 'retreat from the claylands' is widely interpreted as a post-Roman phenomenon,[441] the evidence laid out above implies that a degree of agricultural retrenchment occurred before the turn of the fifth century.

While the scale of arable cultivation declined, evidence for the continuation of livestock husbandry is apparent. Small quantities of late fourth-century material, particularly coinage, has been recovered from the margins of valley floor meadows, as well as on the interfluves, suggestive of the continued use of these grazing resources for livestock management. These scatters occur in both the Sandlings and the claylands, suggesting that this continuation of livestock husbandry was pervasive. Such evidence may suggest that the widely acknowledged Early Saxon shift to livestock farming may have roots in the later fourth century.

It is arguable, therefore, that some of the transformations of the landscape often assigned to the fifth century may have begun in the last decades of the fourth. This is not to suggest that the emergence of the characteristically 'Early Saxon' landscape occurred in the later fourth century; rather, the fifth century apparently witnessed the flowering of trends with antecedent roots, as opposed to wholesale transformations of the landscape. It has been posited that the fourth century was marked by widespread stability, with the locus of change lying in the fifth century;[442] the evidence from the study area suggests, however, that the significance of the fifth century may have been overstated. The protracted collapse of urbanism and villas in the later fourth century has been the subject of much academic attention; the evidence laid out above

[439] Many late fourth-century metalwork manuring scatters are associated with scatters of Early Saxon material, suggesting that they may derive from the reuse of earlier material.
[440] This pattern may also result from the limited quantities of post-370 metalwork in circulation.
[441] See Chapter Six.
[442] Gerrard, *Ruin*, 103, 246–49.

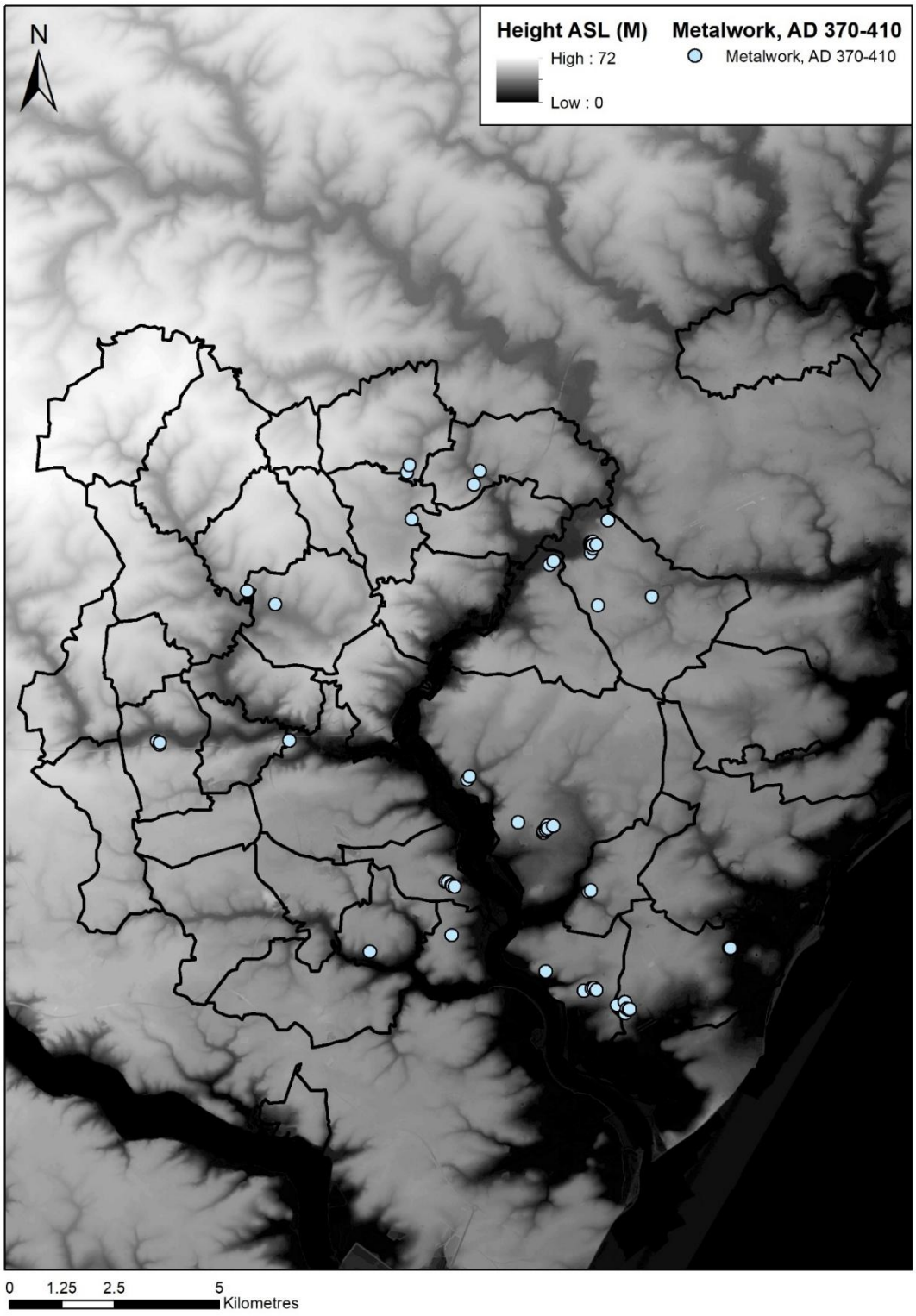

Figure 5.26: the distribution of Late Roman metalwork. Much of this material lies in the valleys of the area, suggesting that it was these prime valley side settlements that continued to be occupied into the last years of the Roman period, while much of the uplands was abandoned, as a focus for settlement at least. Source: PAS.

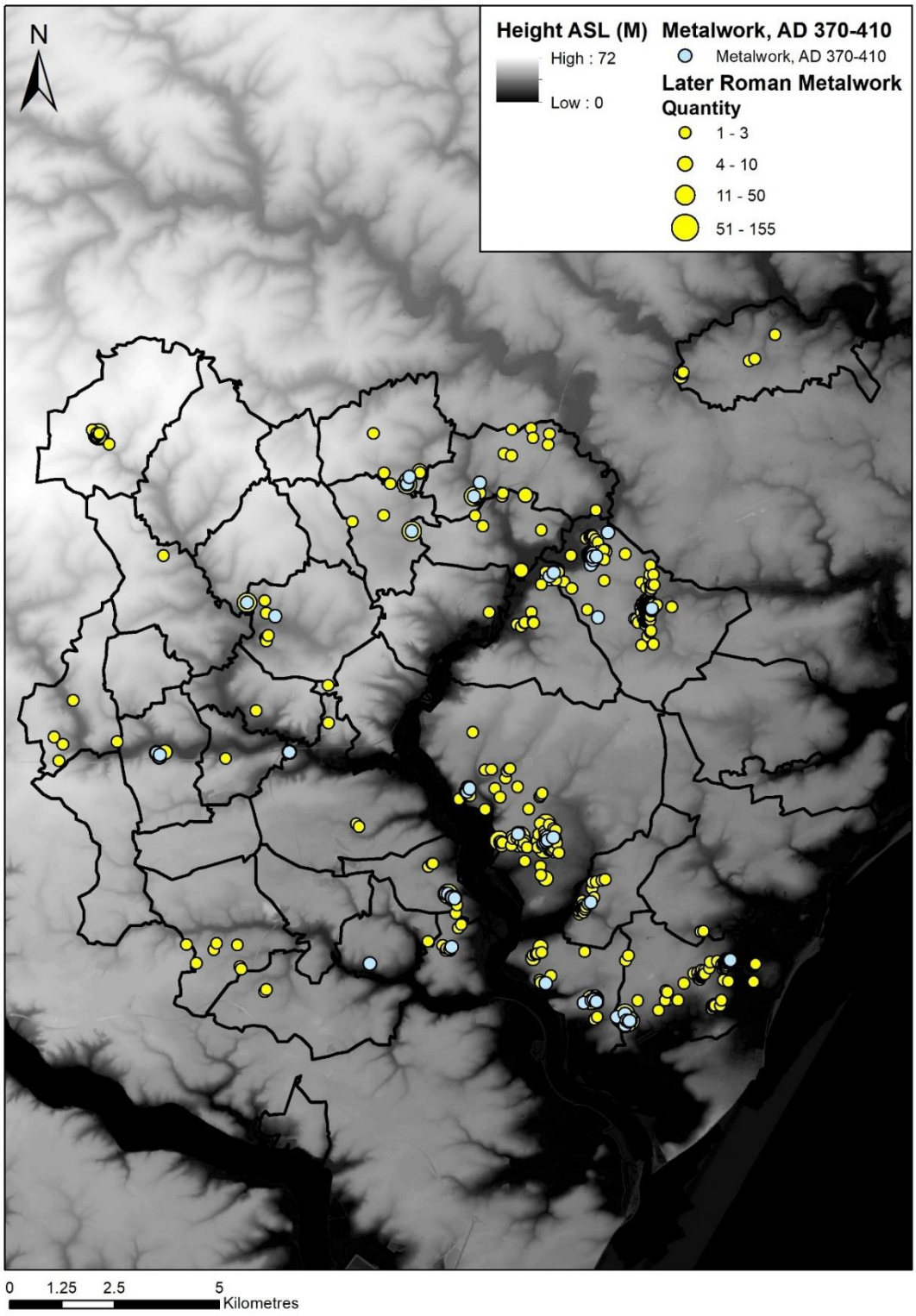

Figure 5.27: the distribution of Late Roman (AD 370-410) metalwork, plotted against the distribution of all later Roman (AD 250-370) metalwork (yellow dots). It is clear that areas that were centres of activity in earlier periods were abandoned in the last decades of the fourth century. Source: PAS.

suggests that the coterminous decline of more typical rural settlements must be also both acknowledged and interrogated.[443]

Conclusion

Later Roman East Suffolk was evidently a prosperous landscape, cleared and exploited by a relatively large population dwelling in settlements largely concentrated in river valleys, although farmsteads extended onto the plateaux in the claylands. This dispersed settlement pattern was punctuated by small agglomerations of settlement, perhaps akin to the villages and hamlets that were to emerge many centuries later. Although much discussion of later Roman East Suffolk, and East Anglia more widely, has presented the countryside as a homogenous whole, subregional variations in settlement patterns and landholding systems are apparent, particularly below the ranks of the villa-owning elite.

From these settlements, large areas of the landscape were cultivated, some fields on an annual basis, others more sporadically. While a greater area was under the plough than in both preceding and succeeding periods, substantial areas of uncultivated ground remained, denoted by a lack of ploughzone manuring scatters. These areas, carrying woodland, wood pasture and heath, were central to the management of livestock in the later Roman countryside.

Subregional variations in the exploitation of these uncultivated landscapes are apparent. The claylands were inherently suited to cattle farming, with large herds grazed on the upland wood pastures before being stalled overwinter in barns and yards. The stalling of these animals gave greater opportunity for household refuse to become incorporated in their manure before it entered arable fields, engendering the formation of dense manuring scatters while leaving comparably little material in middens surrounding settlement sites. In the Sandlings, on the other hand, livestock husbandry was dominated by the management of large flocks of sheep, grazed upon the upland heaths during the day before being folded on arable land and fallows at night. Such direct manuring left little opportunity for household waste to become incorporated into manure, resulting in comparatively few dense ploughzone manuring scatters and more material remaining in the middens and yards surrounding dwellings. Although household waste was employed as manure in the Sandlings, this was secondary to direct manuring by flocks of

[443] Martin Henig, 'The Fate of Late Roman Towns', in *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, ed. David A. Hinton et al. (Oxford University Press, 2011); Simon Esmonde Cleary, 'Britain at the End of Empire', in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Britain*, ed. Martin Millett et al. (Oxford University Press, 2016).

sheep; much of this complexity has previously been overlooked owing to the national and regional scale of many studies of the later Roman landscape.[444]

[444] Allen et al., *Rural Economy*, 86; Mark Maltby, 'The Meat Supply in Roman Dorchester and Winchester', in *Urban Rural Connexions: Perspectives from Environmental Archaeology*, ed. Allan R. Hall and H.K Kenward (Oxbow Books, 1994), 86.

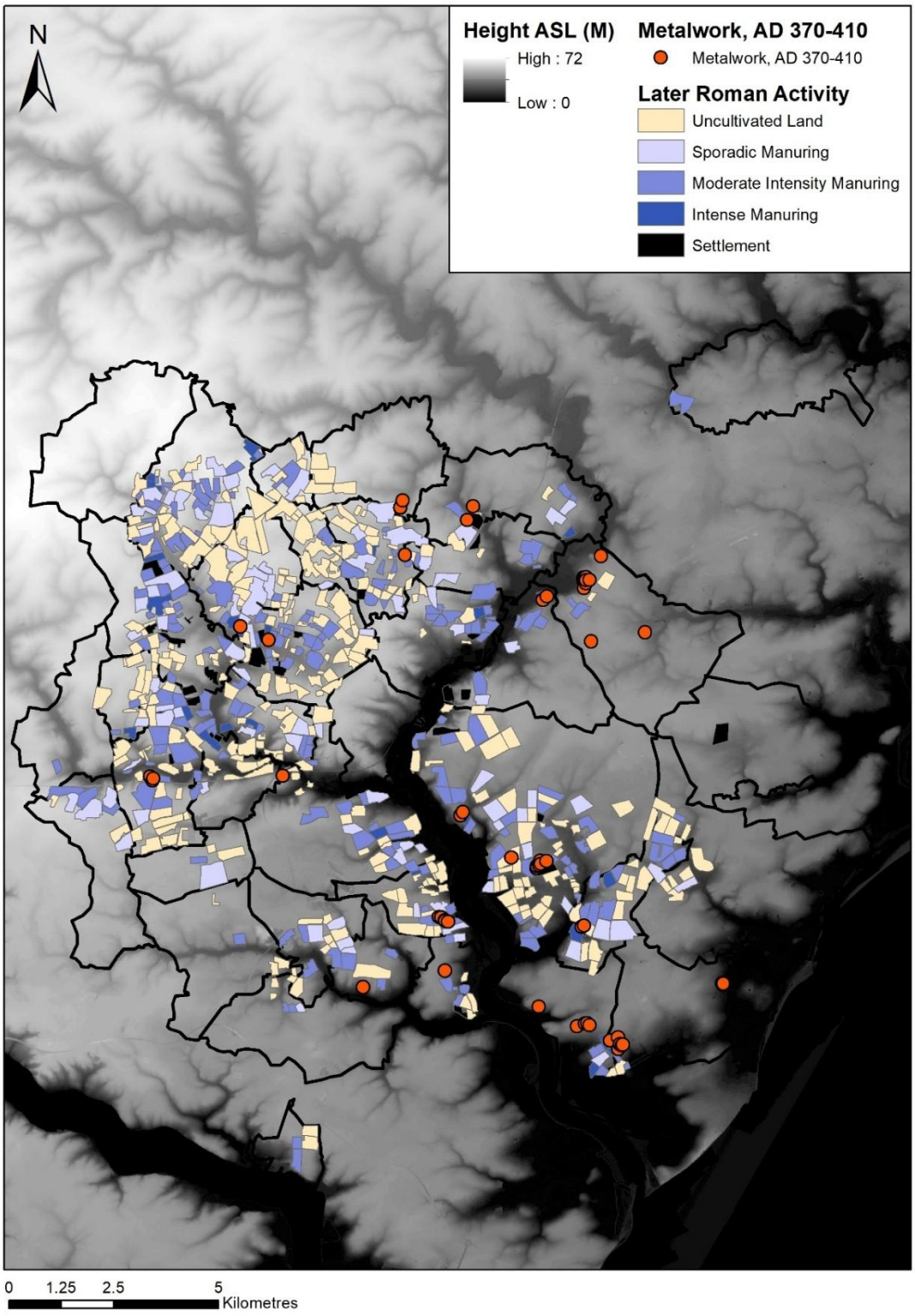

Figure 5.28: the distribution of Late Roman metalwork in the of the study area. Little of this Late Roman material has been recovered from areas of arable cultivation, implying a decline in arable farming, although the scatters of material from the plateau imply continued livestock farming. Source: DVSA, 1-37 and PAS.

Chapter Six: The Early Saxon Landscape of East Suffolk *c*. 410-700

The Later Roman to Early Saxon Transition: Settlement Continuity and Contraction

The transition of the 'Roman' landscape into one that was apparently 'Anglo-Saxon' in character has been the subject of much debate. While some have suggested that the Late Roman countryside was lost in the turbulence of the fifth century, others have argued for a much greater degree of continuity.[445] The chronology of this transition is, however, poorly understood, with many simply discussing the 'Early Saxon' period as a whole, rather than offering a more subtle perception of the fifth to seventh centuries; such limited interpretation stems from the widespread reliance on ambiguously-dated fieldwalking datasets to understand landscape change. The methodology laid out above offers, however, the opportunity to more closely date patterns of continuity and change in the countryside of East Suffolk.

It is clear that widespread discontinuity was, to some degree, manifested in the settlement pattern of the study area. An overwhelming contraction in the scale of occupation is evident, representative, perhaps, of significant demographic decline, although estimating population levels from the ploughzone can be misleading.[446] The 30 farmsteads of the later Roman period were replaced by a mere ten ceramically-attested Early Saxon settlements, implying a reduction in occupation by as much as two thirds, with settlements strung throughout the landscape at a density of approximately 1 settlement per 5km^2 (Figure 6.1). Indeed, as will be discussed below, these settlements were not all contemporary, suggesting that the density of occupation in the study area was substantially lower.[447] The Early Saxon settlement pattern appears a truncated version of that of the third and fourth centuries, with the scale of occupation much reduced.

At a cursory level, it appears, therefore, that East Suffolk witnessed widespread settlement retraction in the fifth century. Yet, the methodology here employed, along with the long-term perspective of the present study, enables a more nuanced understanding of this settlement change than has previously been possible.[448] As suggested in Chapter Five, the supposedly stable

[445] Rippon et al., *Fields of Britannia*, 1–16.
[446] Williamson, 'Settlement in North-West Essex', 124.
[447] Similar contractions in settlement have been noted elsewhere. See Rogerson et al., *Barton Bendish and Caldecote*, 13–21.
[448] Davison, for example, simply compared the 'Roman' and 'Early Saxon' settlement patterns. See Davison, *South-East Norfolk*, 15–16.

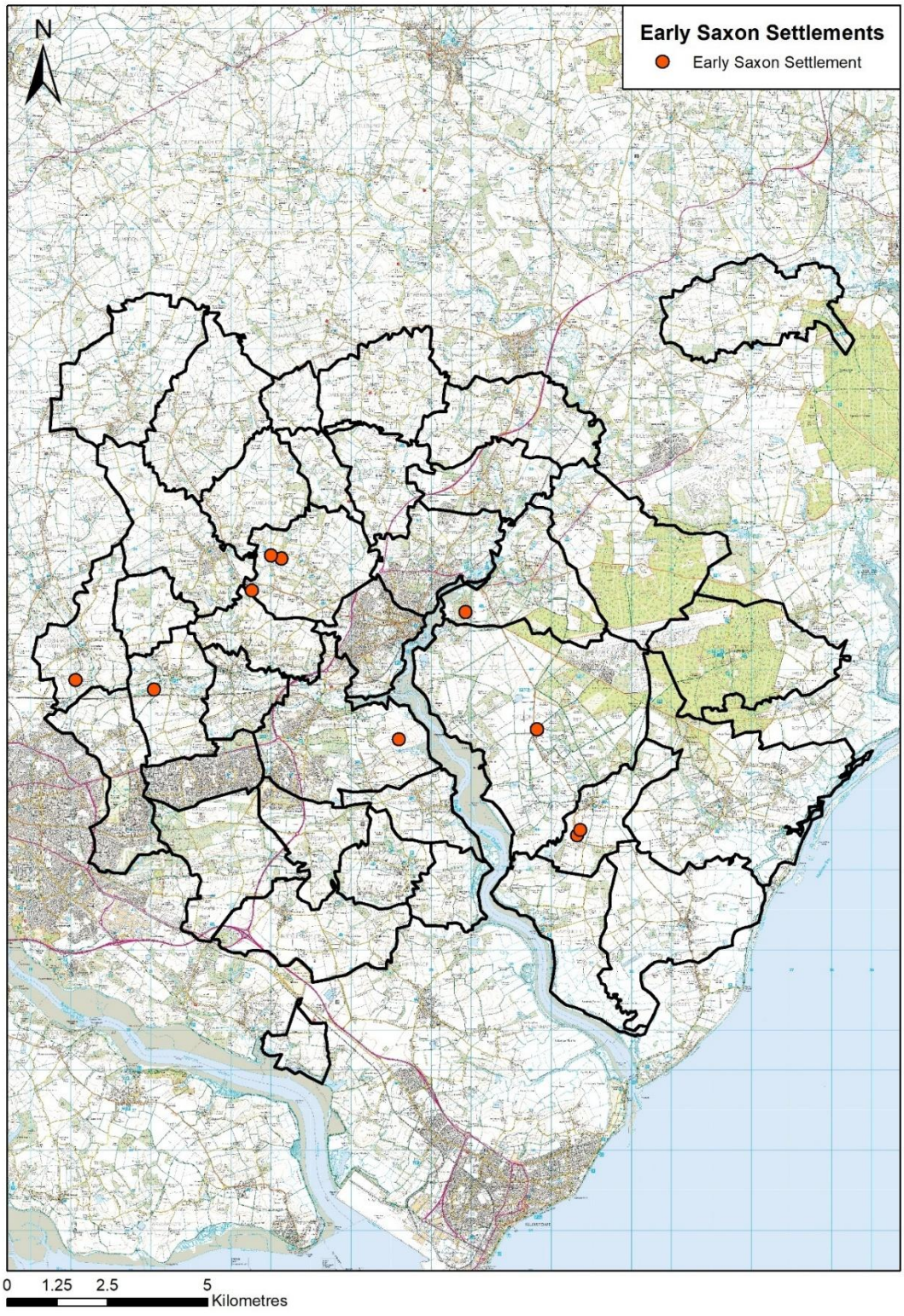

Figure 6.1: The archaeologically attested Early Saxon settlements of the study area. Source: DVSA, 1-37.

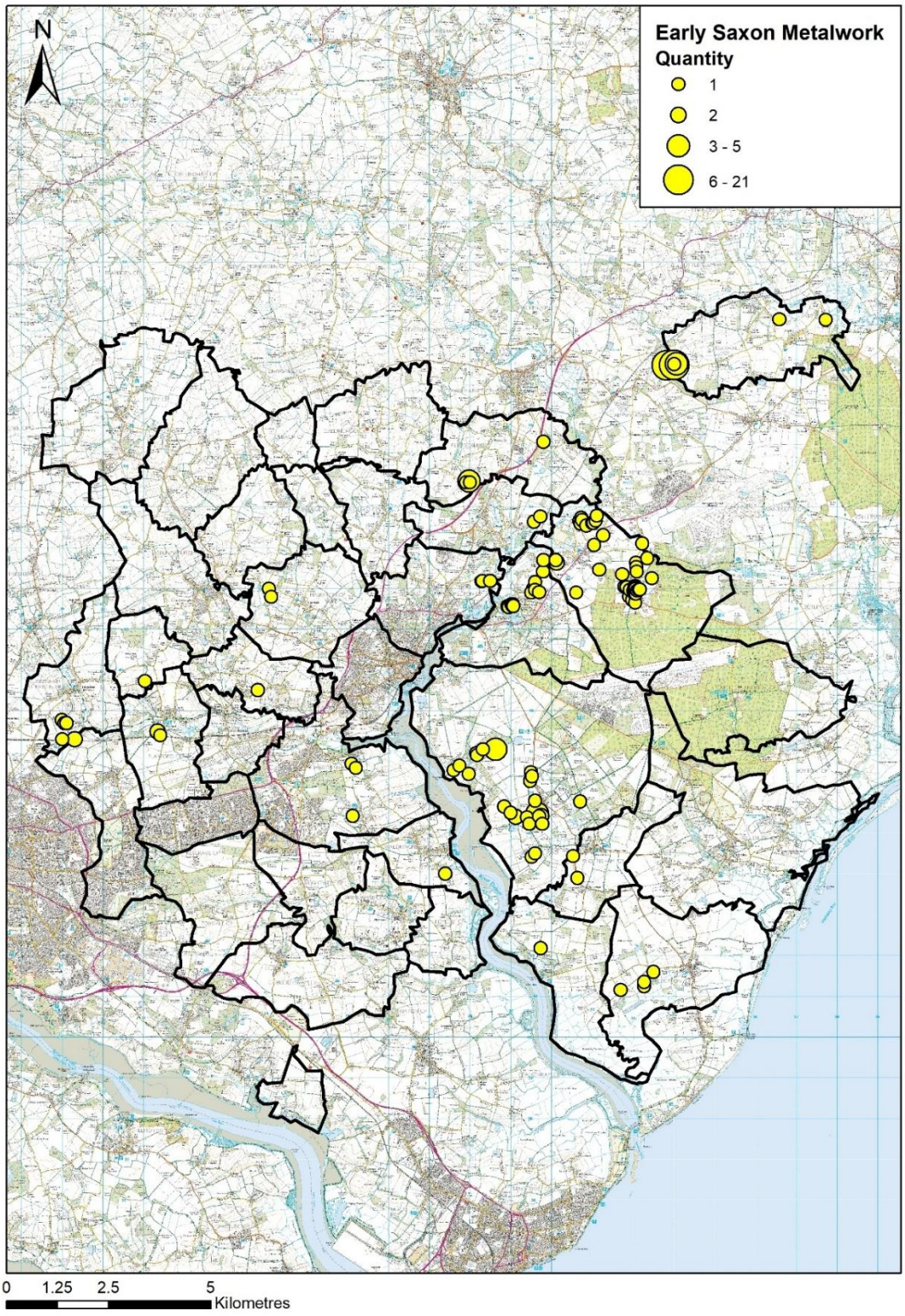

Figure 6.2: the distribution of Early Saxon metalwork in the study area. Source: PAS.

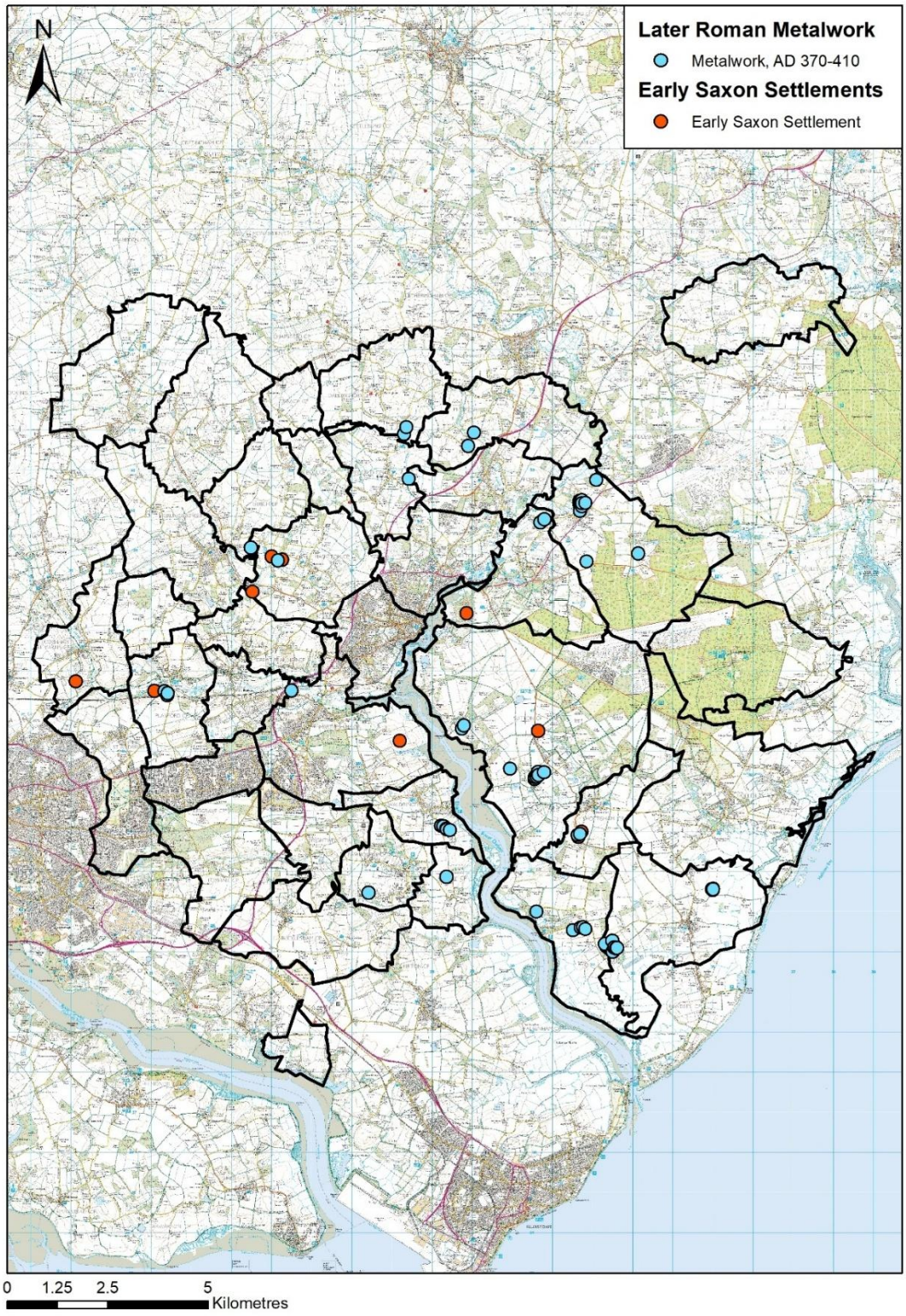

Figure 6.3: the distribution of Late Roman metalwork in the study area and its association with Early Saxon settlement. It is clear that a degree of retrenchment occurred in the fifth century; yet, in the context of the Late Roman decline of settlement, this decline appears less significant. Source: DVSA, 1-37 and PAS.

later Roman landscape underwent, in East Suffolk at least, a period of retrenchment in the later fourth century. While the fieldwalking data suggests the presence of 30 settlements of later Roman date, only six of these sites were certainly occupied in the third quarter of the fourth century, although metalwork from the study area more widely suggests the presence of perhaps a further eight Late Roman settlements (Figure 6.3).[449] While it has often been implied that, at the turn of the fifth century, the landscape was cleared, settled and exploited, a sizeable degree of retrenchment and desertion had already occurred in the countryside of East Suffolk.

In this light, the contraction of settlement in the Early Saxon period appears less significant. Rather than the abandonment of perhaps two thirds of the settlement pattern, the evidence laid out above suggests that the density of settlement declined by some 30% in the immediate post-Roman period.[450] The evident collapse of late fourth-century occupation sites clearly attests that some degree of desertion took place.[451] Yet, this process was much more nuanced than many have argued; rather than a widespread collapse of the Romano-British countryside, the fifth century witnessed the continued, and perhaps accelerated, retrenchment of a settlement pattern that had been in decline in the late fourth century. The end of Roman administration in Britain 'was a catalyst that propelled social, political and economic changes along trajectories they had been moving towards for much of the late Roman period',[452] characterised by a process of social, economic and cultural realignment and a more subtle adjustment and retrenchment of the settlement pattern than is often proposed.

Continuity and Change in Settlement Location

Despite the decline in settlement density, a degree of continuity between those sites occupied in the Early Saxon period and preceding centuries is apparent. Sixty percent of settlements occupied in the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries were located on or adjacent to later Roman occupation sites (Figure 6.4).[453] Such a pattern may result from continuity of settlement location,

[449] Twenty-three individual scatters of late fourth-century metalwork are evident in the study area, 11 of which are comprised of more than one artefact. Some ceramically attested settlement sites not coterminous with spreads of metalwork may also have remained occupied into the late fourth century.
[450] Spreads of metalwork attest further Early Saxon settlements and cemeteries in the study area.
[451] Seventeen percent of Late Roman settlements attested by spreads of pottery and metalwork dating from 370-410, show no evidence of Early Saxon activity. Late Roman settlements demarcated by spreads of metalwork beyond the area surveyed by Newman also show evidence of abandonment. Of the eleven scatters of more than one metalwork artefact, four (36%) show no evidence of Early Saxon activity.
[452] Gerrard, *Ruin*, 251.
[453] Adjacent settlements are here defined as those located within fields that abut upon those occupied in previous centuries. The sample of Early Saxon settlements is, however, limited.

as opposed to continued occupation. The environments occupied in the later Roman period were, on the whole, also viable for settlement in the Early Saxon period; these favourable environmental contexts, having been abandoned in the fourth and fifth centuries, may subsequently have been reoccupied, resulting in the apparent association between Early Saxon settlements and antecedent occupation.

The Sutton church settlement appears a manifestation of this process. The site was occupied in the later Roman period, as attested by a dense scatter of greyware, although, as suggested in Chapter Five, this settlement appears to have been of low status, perhaps occupied by labourers tied to the nearby villa. While the spread of handmade pottery recovered from the site attests Early Saxon occupation, the earliest closely datable metalwork derives from the second half of the sixth century, suggesting that the settlement was deserted before being reoccupied, perhaps due to its favourable environmental position adjacent to numerous springs at the head of a tributary of the Deben.[454] Significantly, no Late Roman metalwork was recovered from the settlement, suggesting that the site was abandoned before the end of the fourth century, although this may also be due to the low status of occupation at the site. Such evidence indeed suggests that the apparent association between later Roman settlements and Early Saxon occupation may, in many cases, be the result of the reoccupation of favourable areas of the landscape after a period of desertion.

Yet, much continuity of settlement is apparent in other areas. Many Early Saxon settlements associated with spreads of fifth-century material are coterminous with scatters of Late Roman metalwork, suggesting that occupation continued at a local level

[454] A girdle hanger possibly dating from the fifth century was recovered from the site, but this object has an ambiguous date range spanning 200 years and cannot, therefore, be used as reliable dating evidence. See PAS SF-E933C1.

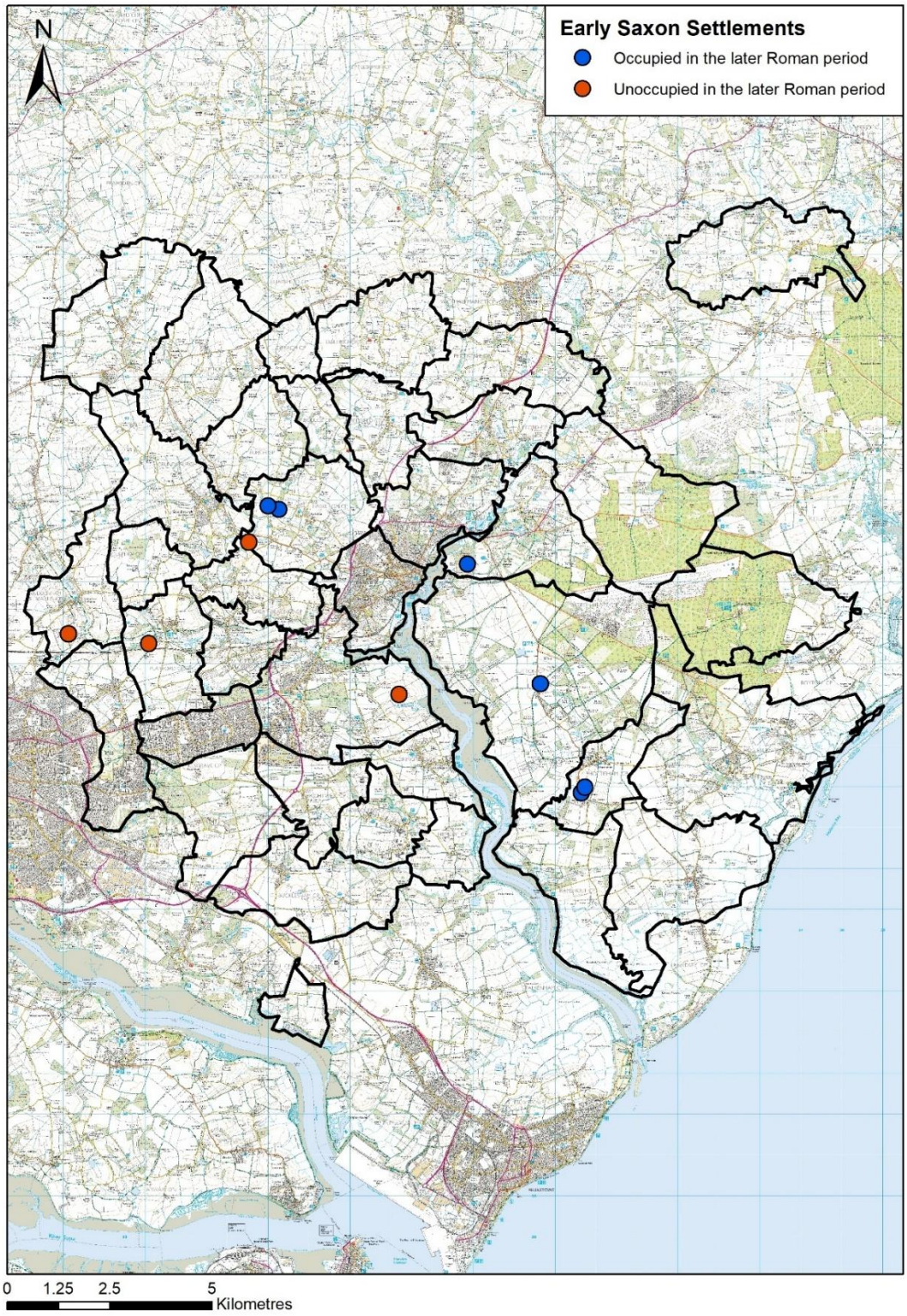

Figure 6.4: the association between later Roman and Early Saxon settlement sites. A complex pattern of settlement foundation, desertion and continued occupation is apparent. Source: DVSA, 1-37.

through the period of political transition in the late fourth and fifth centuries. The settlement in Pettistree reflects this continuity. The site is marked by significant later Roman occupation, with numismatic evidence suggesting that settlement continued into the last decades of the fourth century. Characteristically 'Germanic' cultural material, possibly dating from as early as AD 410, has been recovered from the site, implying unbroken activity from the late fourth into the fifth century and indeed beyond. While it is arguable that this may represent reoccupation after a short period of abandonment, the near-continuous chronology of material recovered from the site implies unbroken occupation, although it is less certain whether this translates to continuity of population.

While there is, in many cases, an association between areas of later Roman occupation and Early Saxon settlement, the extent of this relationship should not be overstated. Some 40% of Early Saxon settlements were located in areas of the landscape that had not been settled since the Iron Age. Indeed, the lack of pre-fifth-century material recovered from such sites implies that some Early Saxon settlements were founded in previously unsettled landscapes. One such site is in Tuddenham St Martin, where a spread of handmade pottery was recovered overlooking the valley of the River Fynn in an area from which no Roman material has been recovered. This scatter of Early Saxon pottery is coterminous with a limited spread of metalwork concentrated in the west of the field, perhaps representing a small cemetery, while another possible cemetery overlooks the settlement from the south. The metalwork from both possible cemeteries suggests that burial, and, in all likelihood, associated occupation, began in the second half of the fifth century, continuing until the start of the seventh century, at the earliest. Similar patterns are apparent at the Blaxhall site, where a large cemetery, and, arguably, an associated settlement, was established in the first decades of the fifth century on a site which, to judge from the ploughzone evidence, had not been settled since the Neolithic period (Figure 6.5). [455] While it has been suggested that the Early Saxon settlement pattern 'can only be understood in terms of what came before',[456] it is clear that numerous settlements were established anew in the fifth century.

[455] 39 artefacts have been recovered from the site, including burned buckles and brooches such as PAS SF-3878 and SF-3877, implying the presence of a cemetery. Although estimating the number of burials from ploughzone evidence is problematic, the 680 cremations at Spong Hill produced 206 non-ferrous metal artefacts, perhaps suggesting that the Blaxhall cemetery contains c.130 burials.

[456] Mileson and Brookes, *Peasant Perceptions*, 44.

Figure 6.5: artefacts recorded with the PAS from the funerary areas of the Blaxhall and Tuddenham sites. Left – SF3877 silver fire damaged buckle. Right – SF-AFF0C5 copper alloy cruciform brooch. Images not to scale.

The evidence from the study area presents, therefore, a nuanced picture of settlement foundation, continued occupation and abandonment in the immediate post-Roman period. Of the ten Early Saxon settlements in the study area, seven are associated with spreads of contemporary metalwork. Of these, six (86%) show evidence of fifth-century occupation, although the ambiguous date range of many Early Saxon artefacts suggests that a proportion of these objects may date from the sixth century. Five (71%) of these sites show clear evidence of occupation in the Late Roman period, suggesting that the Early Saxon settlement is the direct successor of the antecedent occupation site, implying significant continuity in the countryside.[457] A single (14%) site also occupied an area of antecedent settlement, albeit with an apparent break in occupation in the late fourth and fifth centuries. While such examples imply much continuity in the countryside, a further four sites (40%) were established in virgin areas, although only one of these sites is coterminous with a spread of metalwork.

It is evident, therefore, that the transformation of the settlement pattern in fifth-century East Suffolk was more subtle than has widely been suggested, marked by strands of both continuity and change intricately woven throughout the fabric of the landscape. Such suggestions go against much of current historiography, which often implies that the countryside of East Anglia was characterised by *either* transformation or widespread continuity, rather than the partial survival of earlier settlements and landscapes. Such patterns derive, in part, from the comparison of the 'Roman' landscape as a whole with that of the fifth century, rather than

[457] The reuse of later Roman material must be considered throughout the following analysis.

contrasting the late fourth-century picture with that of AD 500.[458] The landscape of the fifth and sixth centuries was characterised by complex mix of growth and decline, marked by the truncation and realignment of the Romano-British countryside but not its wholesale abandonment. Although Hamerow has argued that 'it is rare … to find evidence of direct continuity from Romano-British to Anglo-Saxon occupation at the level of individual settlements',[459] the evidence from East Suffolk suggests that, at a landscape scale, such continuity may be more prevalent than has been proposed.

The Landscape Context of Early Saxon Settlement

Settlement was, in the Early Saxon period, entirely riverine, located in the valleys of rivers such as the Deben, or of smaller tributaries such as the Tang (Figures 6.6 and 6.7). The cemetery and likely settlement site in Blaxhall, for example, was located on the eastern bank of a small tributary of the River Ore, while the large scatter of metalwork representing a settlement and cemetery in Eyke was perched upon the margins of a minor tributary of the Butley River; these sites were also often located at the junction of soil types (Figure 6.8). Such patterns were likely structured by the need to access differentiated environmental resources, with these riverine locations providing access to valley-floor grassland, as well as fertile soils on the valley slopes, while the muted terrain of East Suffolk ensured that the grazing resources of the uplands also lay nearby. Indeed, the attraction of such locations may have grown during the Early Saxon period, owing to changes in the agricultural economy. As will be discussed below, Early Saxon agriculture was centred around livestock production; these changing agricultural practices may have increased the importance of riverine meadows as grazing resources which continue to shoot even during the driest of summers, cementing settlement in river valleys to exploit this resource. These areas of riverine meadow may have been managed for hay in the immediate post-Roman period, allowing large herds of livestock to be maintained throughout the winter. Such use may have added to the importance of these marshes and meadows, encouraging settlement to cluster in these areas to facilitate their management.

It has been widely proposed that the fifth century witnessed a 'retreat from the claylands', that is, the abandonment of clay soils in favour of lighter sands and loams.[460] Following the collapse of Roman administration in Britain, it is suggested that the settlement pattern underwent a period of retrenchment, marked by a 'reversion to an essentially … prehistoric settlement

[458] Again, such patterns derive from reliance on poorly dated pottery scatters.
[459] Hamerow, *Rural Settlements*, 144.
[460] Warner, *Origins*, 64–65; Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*, 142–44.

pattern' centred on the Sandlings,[461] with the claylands subject to 'large-scale abandonment',[462] although the precise chronology of this settlement change has long been unclear.

This contraction of clayland occupation indeed finds expression in the study area, with 80% of all Early Saxon settlements located in parishes characterised by light but infertile sands (Figure 6.9). The retrenchment of settlement to areas of lighter soil was perhaps a response to changing agricultural practices.[463] It has been argued that, in the fifth century, a collapse of arable farming occurred, coterminous with a shift to less intensive livestock farming systems,[464] perhaps due to the decline of heavy ploughing technology, the loss of imperial taxes and some degree of demographic contraction which removed the impetus to cultivate extensive areas to produce a surplus. With the ability or incentive to cultivate vast tracts of the clayland landscape lost, it is perhaps unsurprising that settlement retrenched to the lighter, easily worked soils of the Sandlings. In the developing pastoral economy of Early Saxon England, the heathland grazing resources offered by these landscapes may also have attracted occupation.

The scale of this desertion has, however, been vastly overstated, including by Newman, who went as far as to suggest that 'boulder clay areas were abandoned through this period'.[465] While settlement contracted to the lighter soils of the Sandlings, this retrenchment did not result in the widespread abandonment of High Suffolk, with settlement continuing in clayland parishes such as Hasketon and Tuddenham St Martin. Some 20% of Early Saxon settlements were located

[461] Warner, *Origins*, 66. Such suggestions underestimate the extent of prehistoric settlement in areas of clay soil, however. See, for example, Williamson, 'Settlement in North-West Essex', 121–24.
[462] Williamson, *Sandlands*, 12–13.
[463] It has also been suggested that settlements in these marginal locations were low status farmsteads, settled in areas of 'under-used land', with the areas of more fertile soils occupied by the sub-Roman population. See Nick Higham, 'From Sub-Roman Britain to Anglo-Saxon England: Debating the Insular Dark Ages', *History Compass* 2 (2004): 10.
[464] Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*, 18–40.
[465] Newman, 'Late Roman', 32.

Figure 6.6: the river Deben in Ufford. It was in the valleys of such rivers and streams that Early Saxon occupation sites could be found.

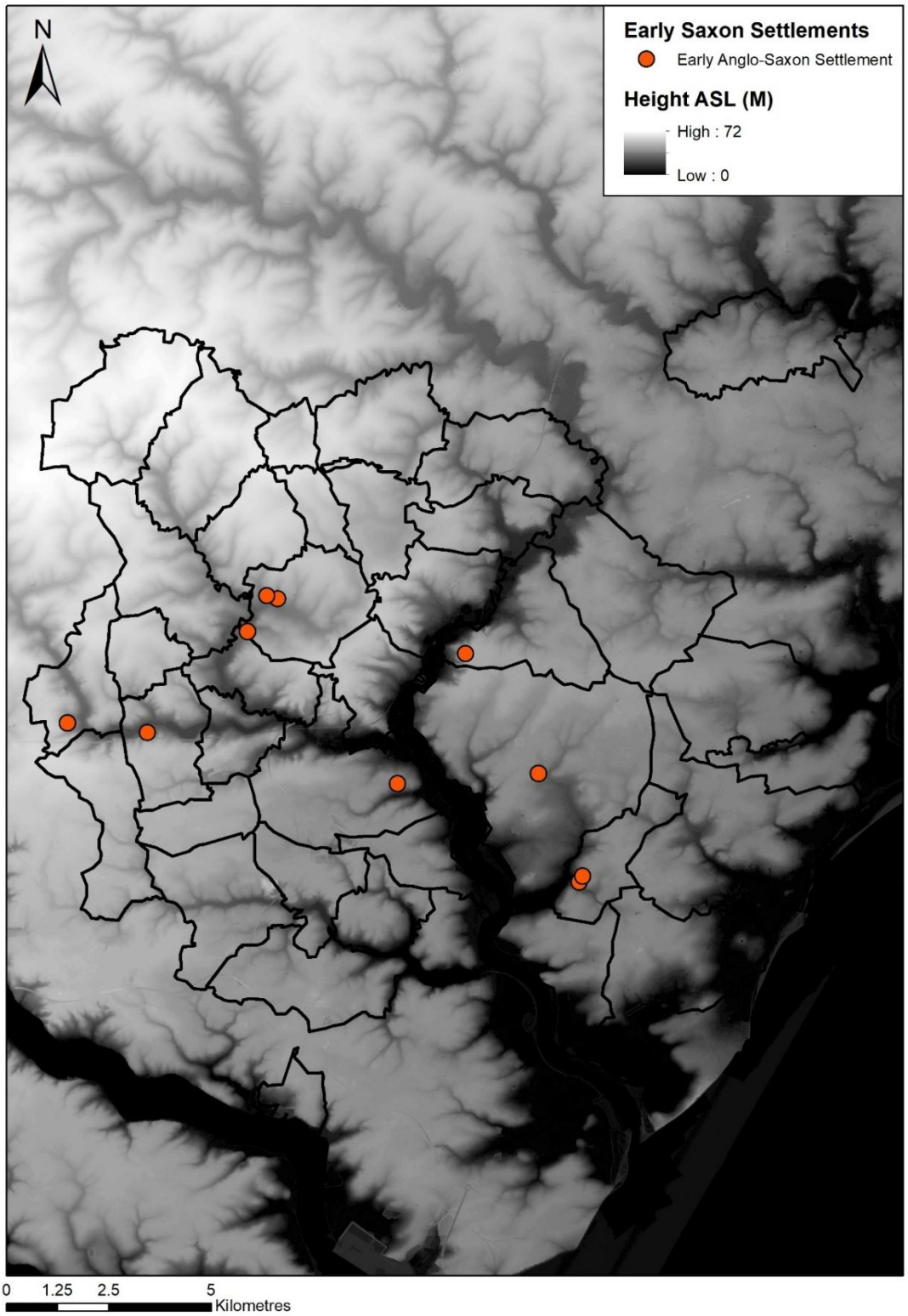

Figure 6.7: the distribution of Early Saxon settlement in the study area and its association with topography. Unlike in the Roman period, Early Saxon settlement was entirely riverine. Source: DVSA, 1-37.

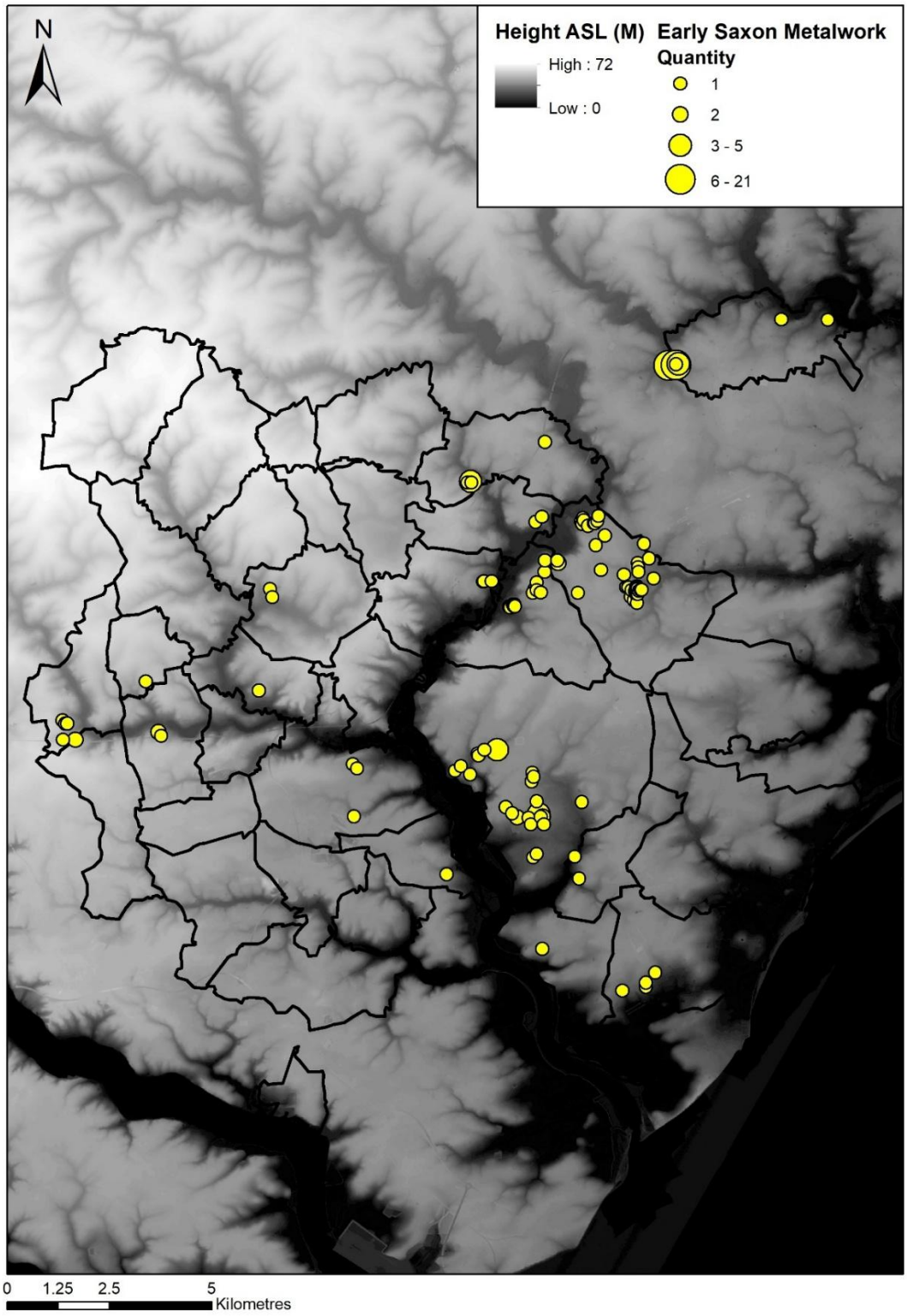

Figure 6.8: the distribution of Early Saxon metalwork in the study area and its association with topography. Even minor streams and tributaries could attract significant activity, as attested in Blaxhall and Eyke. Source: PAS.

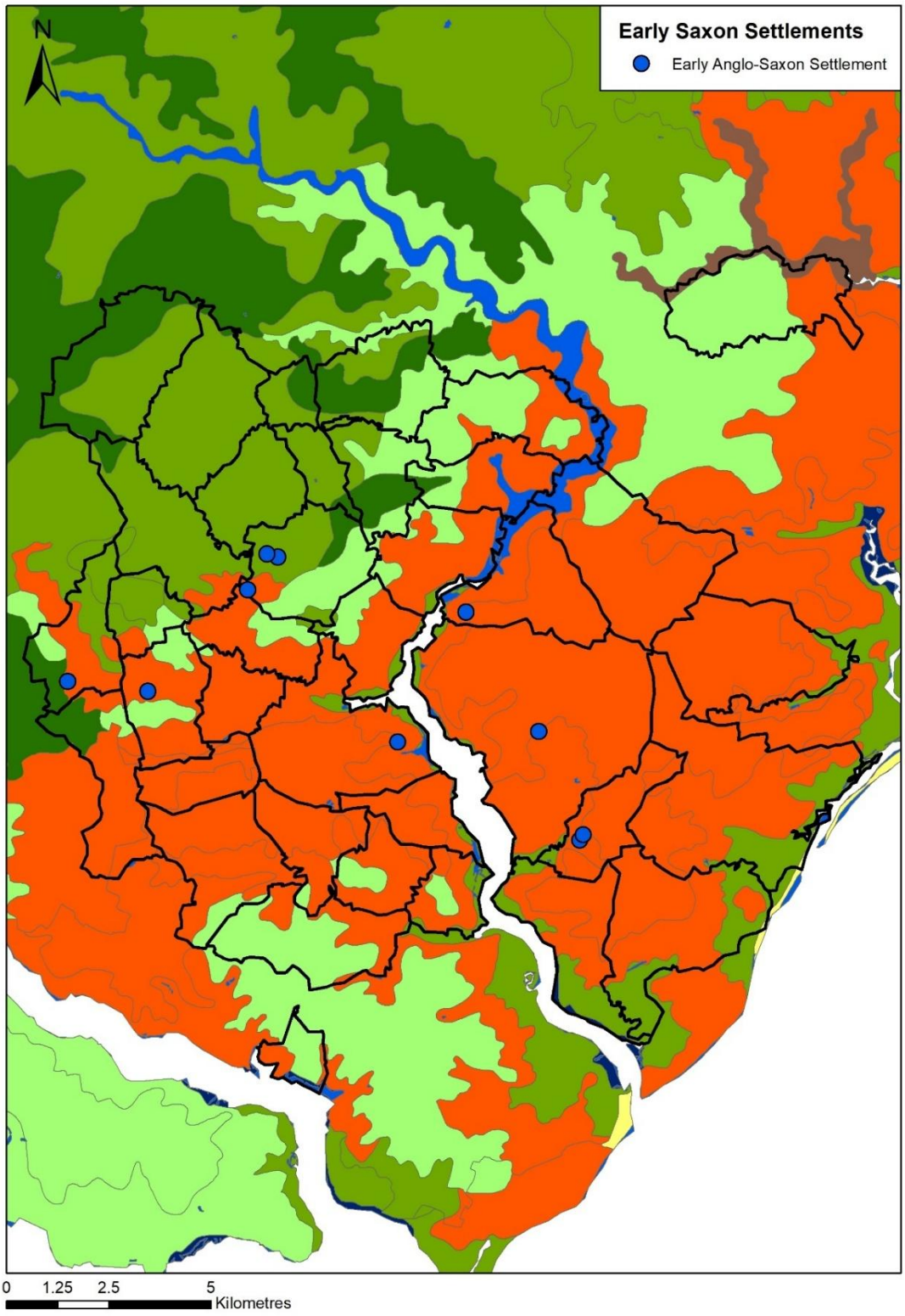

Figure 6.9: The distribution of Early Saxon settlement in the study area and its association with the varied soils of the region. Although settlement did indeed retrench to the light, tractable soils of the Suffolk Sandlings, such notions should not be taken too far; the claylands of High Suffolk were not wholly abandoned. Source: DVSA, 1-37.

in the claylands, while a further two sites lie on the junction between the Sandlings and High Suffolk, implying a significant degree of occupation and exploitation. Indeed, of the 171 Early Saxon metalwork artefacts recorded in the study area, 51 (30%) were recovered from areas of clay soil; although, as demonstrated in Chapter Two, ploughzone metalwork assemblages reflect a range of activities, and, therefore, such metalwork cannot be directly associated with settlement in the absence of pottery scatters, this material implies that activity in the claylands was widespread (Figure 6.10).

Distinction should be drawn, however, between the heaviest clays, often soils of the Beccles or Ragdale Associations located on level areas of the plateau, and patches of sloping, lighter clay soils, often in the river valleys. The heaviest soils were entirely abandoned as a focus for settlement and arable agriculture, while the tractable, lighter soils of the river valleys remained, in many cases, occupied and exploited; it is in such locations, often associated with patches of Burlingham 3 soils, that the clayland cemeteries and associated settlements, such as in Hasketon, can be found. In essence, while the heaviest clays were abandoned as a focus for occupation, the clayland parishes themselves were not.

The precise chronology of this contraction in clayland activity has, however, previously been poorly understood, owing to the reliance upon loosely-dated pottery scatters to understand settlement change. It is often suggested that the collapse of clayland settlement and cultivation was a post-Roman phenomenon, owing to the absence of scatters of handmade pottery recovered from the claylands.[466] Yet, as suggested in Chapter Five, High Suffolk witnessed substantial settlement contraction in the late fourth century, with many sites, particularly in the uplands, abandoned in favour of the resource rich valleys of rivers and streams. In this light, the scale of settlement contraction in the claylands of High Suffolk in the fifth century appears much less significant; although the 'retreat from the claylands' is often posited as a phenomenon of the post-Roman period, the roots of this process, if not its eventual flowering, can be found in the fourth century.

[466] Newman, 'Late Roman', 32.

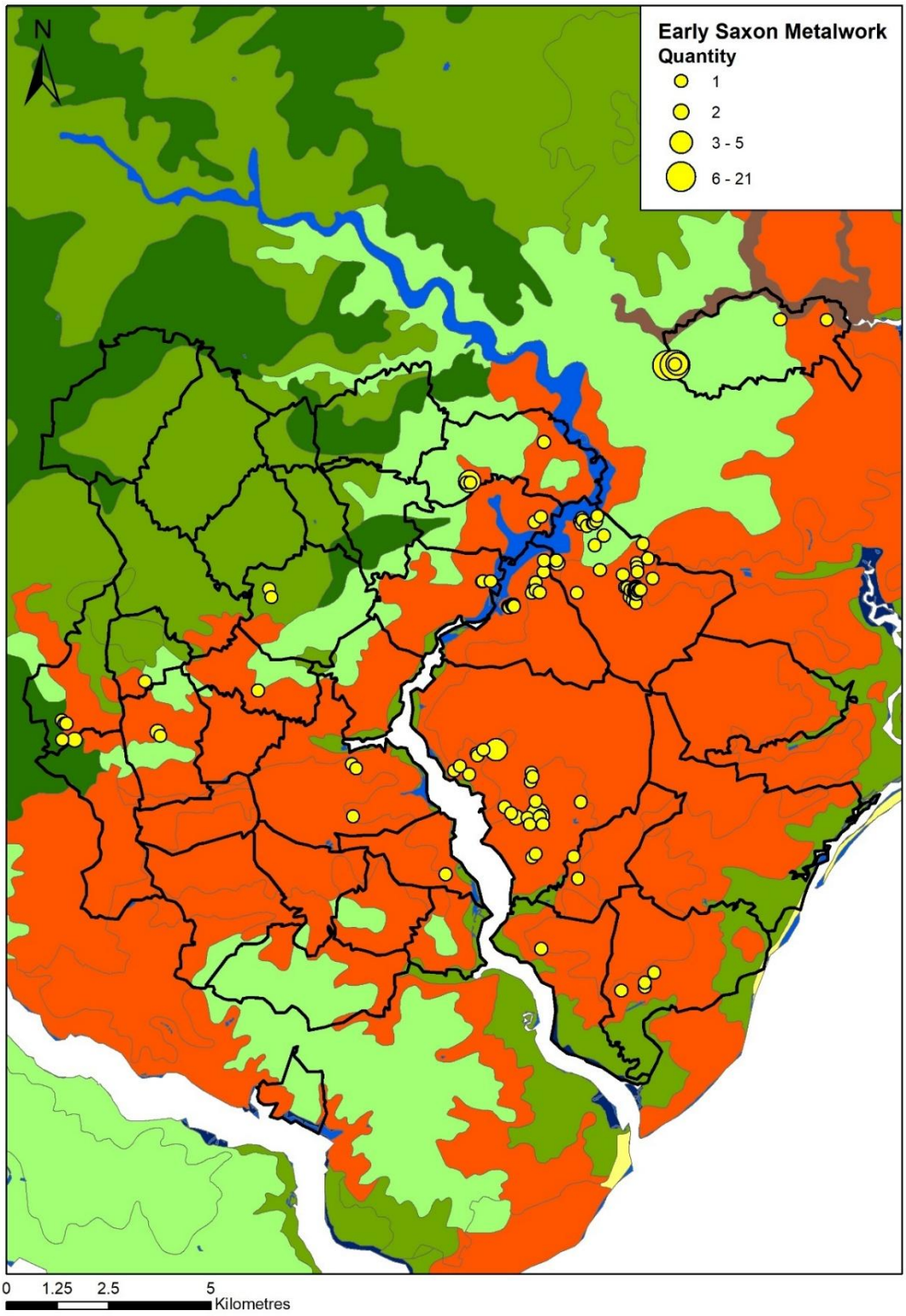

Figure 6.10: The distribution of Early Saxon metalwork and its association with the varied soils of the region. It is clear that the claylands remained extensively exploited. Source: PAS.

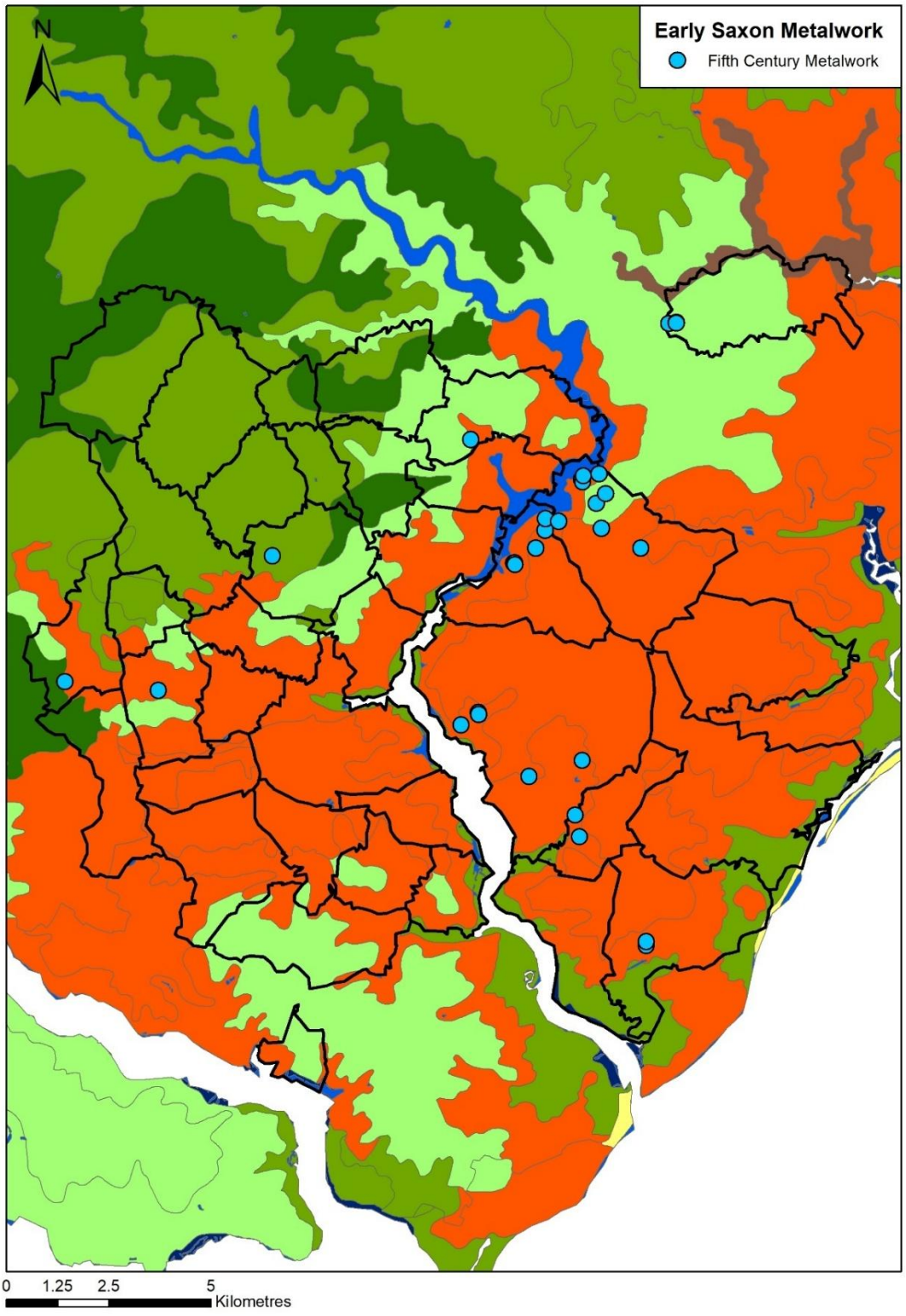

Figure 6.11: the distribution of fifth-century metalwork in the study area. The claylands were evidently not abandoned in the fifth century. Source: PAS.

It can, of course, be argued that these clayland sites are the result of subsequent settlement expansion after abandonment in the fifth and earlier sixth centuries. Indeed, it is widely implied, and rarely evidenced, that the resettlement of the claylands occurred in the later Early Saxon period, before the relative explosion of clayland occupation in the eighth and ninth centuries (see Chapter Seven).[467] The methodology here employed enables, however, closer interrogation of such patterns. Each of those settlements within or on the margins of the claylands that are coterminous with scatters of metalwork were occupied in the fifth century, while spreads of metalwork lying beyond the area fieldwalked by Newman in the claylands also imply a fifth century date of foundation, such as in Blaxhall (Figure 6.11). While desertion and reoccupation are implicit in many models of Early Saxon High Suffolk, the claylands, particularly those patches of lighter, riverine soils, continued to be occupied and exploited throughout the late fourth and fifth centuries.[468]

The Growth and Decline of Settlement in the Early Saxon Landscape

The form of Early Saxon settlement has been much discussed, particularly at a site specific level, with debate focussing on those most widely published settlements such as Mucking and West Stow.[469] Based upon the evidence of these excavated sites, it has been suggested that Early Saxon settlements were transient and unstable, with sprawling clusters of dwellings gently wandering throughout the countryside, leaving spreads of occupation debris in their wake. [470] The evidence upon which such notions are founded is, however, somewhat problematic. Although the excavations at Mucking were among some of the largest undertaken in England at the time, only 18 hectares of the countryside was excavated;[471] such approaches, although successful in uncovering farmsteads and their associated burial grounds, offer little insight into patterns of settlement change at a landscape scale.[472] Although the long date range of many Early Saxon artefacts and the relative lack of closely datable coinage limits, to some degree, the close interpretation of settlement expansion in the study area, the methodology set out in Chapter Two offers new opportunities to closely examine subregional patterns of landscape change.

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[467] Warner, *Origins*, 64; Newman, 'Late Roman', 32–35.
[468] Paleoenvironmental evidence also attests continued clayland exploitation. See Rippon et al., *Fields of Britannia*, 169–82.
[469] Discussion has, however, often focussed on the social context of Early Saxon buildings. See, for example, Helena Hamerow, 'Anglo-Saxon Timber Buildings and Their Social Context', in *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, ed. David A. Hinton et al. (Oxford University Press, 2011).
[470] Hamerow, 'Settlement Mobility', 1–17.
[471] Ann Clark, *Excavations at Mucking: Volume 1: The Site Atlas* (English Heritage, 2012).
[472] Hamerow, 'Settlement Mobility', 1–6.

Transient, ephemeral settlements are indeed attested in the study area. A total of seven settlements delineated by scatters of pottery are also associated with spreads of metalwork, six (86%) of which display evidence of activity in the fifth century. Of these six, four (67%) were abandoned by the last decades of the sixth century.[473] The pair of settlement sites in Shottisham were deserted by AD 550 at the latest, for example, while the two adjacent settlement sites in Hasketon, located on opposing banks of a small stream, were occupied in the Late Roman period, with settlement continuing until the middle decades of the sixth century. The settlement was then abandoned, with the lack of seventh-and-eighth-century material recovered from the surrounding landscape suggesting a significant degree of settlement change. Further evidence of settlement desertion can be found in the survey parishes more widely. Of the ten dense scatters of metalwork recovered beyond the area fieldwalked by Newman, two sites (20%) are marked by scatters of only fifth-and-sixth-century material, suggesting that the settlements were abandoned by *c.* 600.[474] It is, however, unclear whether these sites were deserted or simply drifted beyond the confines of the surveyed area, although the lack of wider seventh-and-eighth-century material recovered from the surrounding landscape is again suggestive of substantial settlement change. Such evidence implies that the instability and transience of settlement identified at excavated sites is also apparent at a landscape scale.

Although the 'shifting settlements that predominated in the Early Anglo-Saxon landscape' are indeed attested in the study area,[475] long-term continuity of occupation is also apparent; such occupation has largely gone unrecognised at a landscape scale.[476] A third of settlements marked by spreads of fifth-century metalwork continued to be occupied into the seventh century and, on occasion, beyond. The fifth-century settlement in Tuddenham St Martin, for example, was apparently occupied into the seventh and eighth centuries, while settlement in Playford possibly continued as late as the ninth century. Metalwork scatters from the survey parishes more widely are also suggestive of further settlement stability. The scatter of metalwork likely representing a settlement and small cemetery overlooking the River Deben in Eyke, for example, is marked by a spread of late fifth-century material. Metalwork from the site suggests that activity

[473] The sites that were apparently abandoned in the sixth century are two pairs of occupation sites in Shottisham and Hasketon. These sites are counted as four individual settlements, as the settlement debris was scattered across two separate fields, although they may, instead, represent unified sprawling settlement sites. If these pairs of sites are considered as one, the extent of settlement transience is much less marked, with 50% of ceramically attested settlements occupied from the fifth to seventh centuries.
[474] These sites are defined as scatters of three or more metalwork artefacts.
[475] Hamerow, 'Settlement Mobility', 17.
[476] Long-term settlement stability has, however, been noted at West Heslerton. See Dominic Powlesland, 'The West Heslerton Assessment', *Internet Archaeology* 5 (1998).

continued into the sixth century and beyond, implying long-term continuity of occupation. Similar patterns are evident on the Bromeswell site, with metalwork evidence attesting occupation from the fifth century into the late seventh century at the earliest. Such examples are reflective of a wider pattern; of the ten scatters of three or more metalwork artefacts not coterminous with spreads of pottery, eight (80%) show evidence of activity from the fifth century until at least the beginning of the seventh, implying significant continuity of burial, and likely, therefore, nearby settlement. As in the later Roman period, shifting, transient settlements coexisted with more stable occupation, fixed in the landscape over many centuries.

Such notions must, however, be treated with caution. The evidence laid out above is suggestive of stability of settlement *location*, as opposed to the continued use or rebuilding of individual dwellings on the same footprint. The broad scale of analysis here employed, as well as the variable accuracy to which PAS data is recorded, suggests that intra-site settlement movement may be overlooked in the present study.

The activities represented in metal detecting datasets may also obscure this settlement stability. As demonstrated in Chapter Two, many dense scatters of Early Saxon metalwork derive from cemeteries rather than settlements.[477] It is possible that, therefore, rather than settlement stability, many of these metalwork scatters may represent continuity of burial, as opposed to continued occupation. These cemeteries may have remained fixed in the landscape while nearby settlements drifted through the countryside, although this still implies some degree of broad continuity of settlement location at a wider scale.

While such notions must be considered, these metalwork scatters represent hitherto unrecognised continuity in the landscape, suggesting that elements of the sixth and seventh-century settlement pattern were in place in the later fifth. Hamerow has argued that 'unambiguous evidence of continuous occupation' over long periods 'remains extremely unusual';[478] the evidence laid out above suggests, however, that this settlement stability may be more prevalent at a landscape scale.

While these patterns of settlement change are best understood at a site-specific scale, further trends are evident in the study area that are worthy of further interrogation.[479] Little variation

[477] That some of these scatters continue beyond the end of furnished burial may suggest that some of these spreads of metalwork indeed derive from settlement.
[478] Hamerow, *Rural Settlements*, 70.
[479] Rippon has similarly emphasised the importance of local processes in the later Roman to Early Saxon transition in Stephen Rippon, 'Landscapes in Transition: The Later Roman and Early Medieval Periods', in *Landscape: The Richest Historical Record*, ed. Della Hooke (Society for landscape studies, 2000).

in the patterns of settlement change is apparent between the environmental subregions here under interrogation. Such evidence suggests that patterns of occupation and abandonment were structured by factors occurring at a wider scale than the present study. It has been suggested that the abandonment of farmsteads may be linked to social considerations or agrarian factors, although each of these arguments have significant flaws.[480] While little evidence for the influences upon this settlement change are apparent in the ploughzone, it is noteworthy that the decline of many settlements occurred in the middle decades of the sixth century, coterminous with the Plague of Justinian and the volcanic winter of 536.[481] While the impact of these catastrophes is unclear, and any link with settlement change manifested in the ploughzone is tenuous, it is plausible that the abandonment of settlement in East Suffolk may have resulted from demographic and environmental changes occurring at a wider scale.

The methodology developed in Chapter Two thus presents a nuanced picture of settlement stability, foundation and desertion much akin to that posited in the later Roman period. Although the reconfiguration of individual dwellings on an intra-site level almost certainly occurred, substantial continuity of settlement location is evident throughout the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries. The replacement of the supposedly stable Romano-British settlement pattern by wandering Early Saxon farmsteads has often been employed as evidence of discontinuity. The strands of settlement stability woven throughout the countryside, and indeed the continuation of the later Roman patterns of shifting occupation laid out in Chapter Five, suggest that such notions should not be taken too far. The emergence of characteristically Germanic settlement forms represents clear discontinuity in the settlement pattern, yet the perpetuation of earlier trends of occupation and abandonment implies that the Early Saxon landscape was marked by *both* continuity and change, with a gradual and partial reshaping of the earlier landscape and settlement pattern.

Continuity, Competition and Early Saxon Social Differentiation

The development of social hierarchies and kingdom formation in the Early Saxon period has been the subject of much debate; such issues have been extensively discussed in an East Anglian context, owing to the prevalence of 'princely burials' and estate centres in the region, widely

[480] Hamerow, *Rural Settlements*, 33–35; McKerracher, *Farming Transformed*, 34–35. For discussion of the issues with each of these models, see Chapter Ten.
[481] John Maddicott, 'Plague in Seventh-Century England', in *Plague and the End of Antiquity: The Pandemic of 541-750*, ed. Lester K. Little (Cambridge University Press, 2007). For the volcanic winter of the mid-sixth century, see Petra Dark, *The Environment of Britain in the First Millenium AD*. (Duckworth, 2009), 22–25.

viewed as the apex of Early Saxon social differentiation.[482] It has been suggested that fifth-and-early-sixth-century society was broadly undifferentiated, particularly in terms of architectural manifestations of social distance,[483] although some have argued for early social differentiation within communities.[484] During the sixth and seventh centuries, it is argued that a social elite emerged, ruling over large swathes of the landscape, manifested most visibly in high status cemeteries, such as Sutton Hoo and Prittlewell, Essex as well as coterminous elite settlements such as Rendlesham and Lyminge, Kent.[485] Although the mechanisms by which this took place remain much debated, it is usually accepted that territories were agglomerated through a continued process of competition and conflict.[486] While arguments surrounding social differentiation and kingdom formation are well rehearsed and, therefore, will not be discussed in detail here, the methodology set out in Chapter Two offers insight into patterns of social differentiation in the countryside.

Social Differentiation *c.* 410-575

While it has been suggested that fifth-and-early-sixth-century society was somewhat undifferentiated, particularly compared to later periods, evidence for social stratification is forthcoming in the study area. As demonstrated in Chapter Two, Early Saxon social hierarchies are manifested in metalwork scatters, with precious metal objects, weapon fittings, and coinage, in particular, associated with the contemporary elite.[487] Although the unstratified nature of ploughzone deposits limits opportunities to interrogate the wealth of individuals within society, intra-site social hierarchies are clearly apparent, suggesting internal ranking within individual settlements and their attendant cemeteries. While much of the fifth-century material from the probable cemetery site at Blaxhall, for example, is comprised of utilitarian copper-alloy objects,

[482] Martin Carver, *Sutton Hoo: Burial Ground of Kings?* (British Museum Press, 2000); Christopher Scull, 'Archaeology, Early Anglo-Saxon Society and the Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 6 (1993): 65–82.
[483] Katharina Ulmschneider, 'Settlement Hierarchy', in *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, ed. David A. Hinton et al. (Oxford University Press, 2011).
[484] See Scull, 'Early Saxon Society'.
[485] Heinrich Harke, 'Early Saxon Social Structure', in *The Anglo-Saxons: From the Migration Period to the Eighth Century; an Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. John Hines (Boydell Press, 1997).
[486] Steven Bassett, 'In Search of the Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms', in *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, ed. Steven Bassett (Leicester University Press, 1989). Other models of social territorial development have, however, been posited. See Stephen Rippon, *Kingdom, Civitas, and County: The Evolution of Territorial Identity in the English Landscape* (Oxford University Press, 2018).
[487] Hinton, *Gold and Gilt, Pots and Pins*, 7–38. That these classes of objects are associated with the elite is manifested in discussions of funerary archaeology. See, for example, Sue Hirst and Christopher Scull, *The Anglo-Saxon Princely Burial at Prittlewell, Southend-on-Sea* (Museum of London Archaeology, 2019).

a small number of silver and gilded artefacts have been identified, such as a silver buckle, apparently melted during a cremation ceremony. Such evidence suggests the presence of individuals of raised social status within the cemetery.

Indeed, ploughzone assemblages may overlook some of the nuances of social differentiation within contemporary society. While elite indicator artefacts are associated with the highest ranks of society, it is plausible that the very presence of metalwork may denote raised social standing, representing individuals of middling rank, while those with unfurnished burials, invisible in the ploughzone, perhaps represent the lowest rungs of society. Such patterns are apparent in excavated cemeteries such as Tittleshall, Norfolk, where unfurnished burials were located alongside burials of varying social status, marked by a range of grave goods.[488] Although invisible in the ploughzone, such notions must be considered throughout the following analysis.

Significantly, this evidence of elite activity is widely dispersed within the study area, with scatters of metalwork with a fifth-and-sixth-century elite component recovered from Pettistree, Bromeswell and Sutton, for example.[489] Indeed, a total of seven scatters of metalwork including elite material dating from *c*. AD 410-575, largely comprised of precious metal and gilded personal possessions and weapon fittings, have been identified in the study area (Figure 6.12).[490] The elite assemblage at Bromeswell for example, is comprised of gilded wrist clasps, located among a wider scatter of more utilitarian material, while elite metalwork from the Sutton site consists of gilded copper alloy brooch fragments.[491] Such evidence suggests the existence of numerous, internally ranked societies, operating within their own 'small worlds'.[492]

While it is dangerous to project modern notions of relative value into Early Saxon society, it is arguable that inter-site social ranking may also be present in this period. It has been suggested in Chapter Two, as well as elsewhere, that precious metal items, especially those objects reflecting far-flung trading links, may have been restricted to the very highest ranks of contemporary society;[493] the varied distribution of such objects may, therefore, represent some

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[488] *Tyttel's Halh: The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Tittleshall, Norfolk.*, no. 150 (East Anglian Archaeology, 2013), 21–51. Similar patterns are evident at the Tranmer House cemetery. See Chris Fern, *Before Sutton Hoo: The Prehistoric Remains and Early Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Tranmer House, Bromeswell, Suffolk*, no. Array (East Anglian Archaeology, 2015), 41–101.

[489] Again, the imprecise dating of many artefact types must be considered throughout.

[490] This figure includes scatters of three or more metalwork artefacts with an elite component, in order to limit the impact of casual loss on the dataset. A further 5 elite objects, recovered as single finds, were recorded in the study area such as the gilded harness pendant from Alderton, see PAS SF-552FD2.

[491] See, for example, PAS SF-74184E, SF-A58FE4 and SF-968D29 from the Bromeswell site.

[492] Gerrard, *Ruin*, 14.

[493] Hinton, *Gold and Gilt, Pots and Pins*, 39–74.

degree of inter-site social differentiation. Sites such as that in Shottisham are marked by gold, rather than silver or gilded copper alloy artefacts, including objects with Frankish associations, suggesting that the elite occupiers of this site may have been of higher status than surrounding petty warlords.[494] Indeed, it has been argued above that the very presence of metal artefacts may denote some degree of social status; the varied scale of metalwork scatters between individual sites may, therefore, similarly represent some degree of social polarity between tribal groups.[495]

The existence of subregional variations in Late Roman social structures has been posited in Chapter Five, with hierarchical patterns of landholding apparent in the Sandlings. Significantly, the fifth and sixth centuries appear to break this pattern, with scatters of metalwork suggestive of a polarised society led by a contemporary 'elite' also apparent in the claylands.[496] The breakdown of this antecedent subregional patterning plausibly attests the severity of the fragmentation of social structures in the late fourth and fifth centuries.

[494] PAS SF-394035.
[495] The lack of secure contexts prevents, however, biases caused by the extent of activity and burial being countered.
[496] See, for example, PAS SF-7520CE.

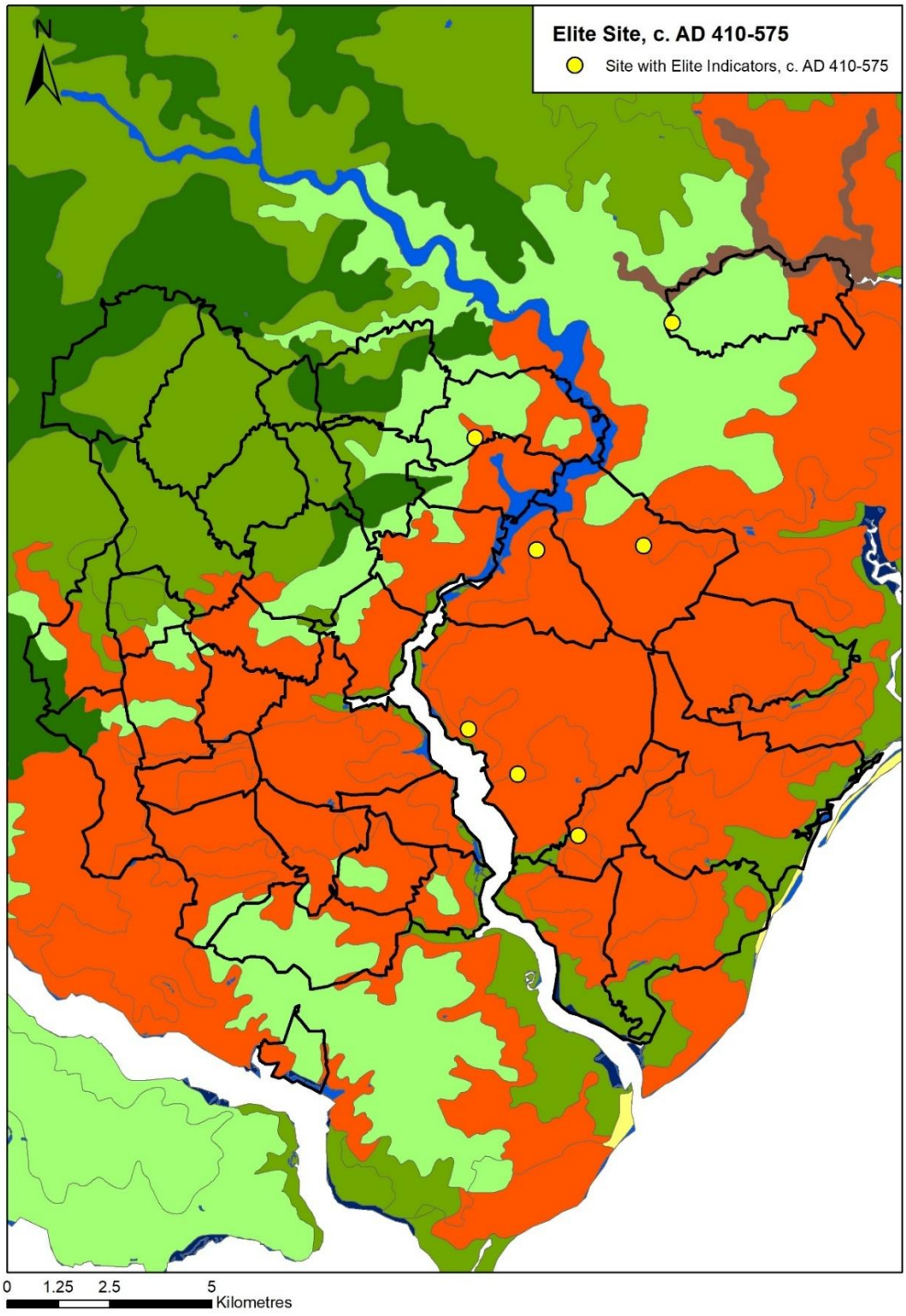

Figure 6.12: the distribution of ceramically attested sites, along with scatters of three or more metal artefacts, which include an elite component. Elite activity was clearly widely dispersed in the fifth and sixth century. Source: DVSA, 1-37 and PAS.

Figure 6.13: high-status objects dating from the period *c.* AD 410-580 recorded with the PAS in the study area. It should be noted that some degree of social gradation is evident within this object category; while gilded objects show some degree of raised social status, precious metal objects highlight those at the very top of society. **1.** SF-394035 gold and garnet mount. **2.** SF-74184E gilded copper alloy sleeve clasp. **3.** SF-E7D2FF gilded copper alloy brooch headplate. Images not to scale.

Figure 6.14: non-elite artefacts dating from the period *c.* AD 410-575 recorded with the PAS in the study area. **1.** SF-195888 copper alloy cruciform brooch. **2.** SF-8BFEC3 copper alloy sleeve clasp. Images not to scale.

Yet, while much of the later Roman social structure fractured, antecedent landholding patterns seemingly structured the development of contemporary society at a local level (Figure 6.15). Many substantial scatters of fifth-and-earlier-sixth-century material, including many of those sites marked by elite indicators, are associated with large, wealthy later Roman settlement sites. The possible villa in Sutton, for example, is also marked by a spread of fifth-and-sixth-century metalwork, including objects of overtly high status, while the dense concentration of later Roman material in Eyke is also associated with a scatter of fifth-to-seventh-century elite metalwork. Although the impact of the post-Roman reuse of later Roman metalwork in the formation of these assemblages must be considered, the relationship between patterns of authority in the fourth and fifth centuries suggests that, to some degree, the emerging status of Early Saxon elites derived, in part, from their status, or that of their ancestors, under Imperial rule.

As the influence of the Roman state waned, members of the Romano-British elite were able to not only negotiate this transitional period owing to their greater resources, but also to prosper, continuing to extract surpluses from the population as they had previously under the aegis of Imperial authority, while also appropriating taxes once paid to the state. In order to maintain this position within society, these local landowners hired warriors, including from Continental Europe.[497] In such circumstances, patterns of authority and lordship in the Late Roman period transmuted into petty kingdoms, ruled by the leaders of small warbands.

The widespread association between locally significant Late Roman centres and fifth-and-sixth-century elite sites implies that such patterns may have been relatively prevalent in East Suffolk. The owners of these later Roman estate centres likely continued extracting renders and dues from the lower classes, enabling the continued accumulation of wealth and armed followers in the fifth century; in these circumstances, the landed elite of the fourth century were recast as the petty warlords of the Early Saxon period. Indeed, that these landowners sat at the apex of contemporary society, already providing local leadership in the later fourth century, may have eased the transition from landowner under the authority of the Roman state to local warband leader in the turbulent fifth century. The fourth-century estate came to form the core of a 'small world' ruled by a fifth-century warlord.

The extent of this continuity should not, however, be overstated. Many significant fourth-century sites, such as in Alderton and Ramsholt, were abandoned in the fifth century rather than developing into the centre of micro-polities. The factors underpinning these varied trajectories

[497] Gerrard, *Ruin*, 245–73.

are unclear. These sites may, however, represent early victims of the patterns of conflict and competition that subsequently resulted in the agglomeration of small territories into larger units. These elite settlements may, in the later fourth or early fifth century, have lost out to neighbours with greater resources, becoming incorporated into surrounding estates.

While it has been argued above that patterns of authority in the fifth century may have been rooted in the past, other sites demarcated by elite indicators were established in previously unsettled areas of the landscape. The cemetery and probable settlement at Blaxhall, for example, was established on a site that had seen no occupation since the Neolithic period.[498] This site may plausibly have been established by a migrant lineage; indeed, a component of the metalwork assemblage denotes Continental associations in the early fifth century, suggesting that the site, and its coterminous 'small world', may have been founded by a group of incomers, perhaps already differentiated by internal ranking. Similar patterns may be proposed in Bromeswell. The prevalence of these sites occupying 'virgin areas' may suggest the relatively widespread migration of tribal groups, planted into the decaying social and territorial landscape of fifth-century East Suffolk.

Such evidence sheds light on the dynamics of social differentiation and territorial lordship in the fifth century and beyond. Although it has been suggested that fifth-and-early-sixth-century society was relatively undifferentiated, evidence of social differentiation is clearly manifested in the ploughzone. Each of these sites demarcated by elite indicators may represent competing lineages, either derived from fourth-century elites or incoming migrant groups. Surrounding settlements and cemeteries, meanwhile, marked by utilitarian material may reflect the farmsteads of the lower classes over which these 'elite' centres exercised rights and jurisdiction. Through conflict and competition, these 'small worlds' were consolidated into ever larger units in the later sixth and seventh centuries. Such a process is reflected in the ploughzone.

[498] Suffolk HER BLX 011.

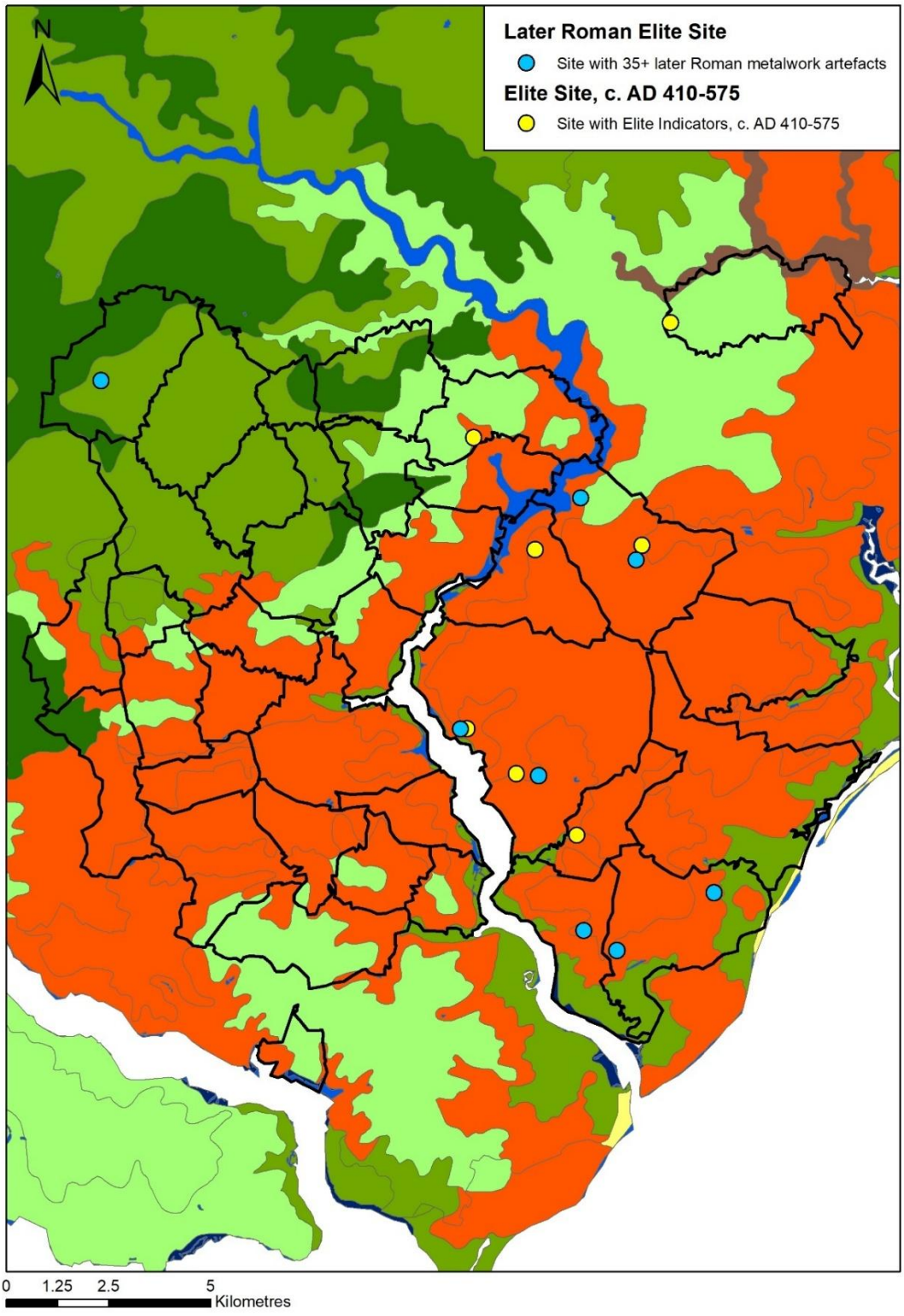

Figure 6.15: the distribution of early elite sites (c.410-575) and their association with areas of later Roman elite activity. Although the association is not universal, it is arguable that, in some cases, antecedent societal structures influenced the emergence of Early Saxon elite groupings. Source: DVSA, 1-37 and PAS

Social Differentiation, *c*. 575-700

As highlighted above, it has been suggested that social hierarchies were formalised in the later sixth and seventh centuries, both within territories as well as between neighbouring polities. This increasing social difference was demarcated in princely burials, as well as through the establishment of great hall complexes, arguably the first architectural manifestations of wealth in the post-Roman period.[499] Again, these arguments have been well rehearsed in an East Anglian context and, therefore, will not be discussed in detail here.[500] Such notions do, however, find manifestation in the study area.

While fifth-and-early-sixth-century elite indicators were relatively widely distributed, representing autonomous, internally ranked groups, the distribution of late-sixth-and-early-seventh-century elite metalwork is much more restricted, a manifestation of changing patterns of authority. While seven areas of fifth-and-early-sixth-century elite activity are apparent in the study area, only three spreads of late sixth-and-seventh-century elite indicators have been recovered, two of which lie in Sutton and may, therefore, be related (Figures 6.16 and 6.17).[501] Such evidence implies the greater concentration of power in fewer hands at the expense of formerly autonomous tribal groups. The precise mechanisms by which this polarisation of authority occurred are unclear, although that the decline of status at some sites was associated with an increase in wealth at others may imply that this was the result of the subordination of previously autonomous groups by competing tribal lineages. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this apparent decline in the status of formerly significant settlement centres is coterminous with the establishment of the elite centre at Rendlesham, suggesting that these sites were now under the regional hegemony of the incipient East Anglian kings. Importantly, that this process of conflict and competition occurred within a society likely characterised by both Germanic and 'Romano-British' leaders of warbands implies the possibility, at least, that some members of the sixth-and-seventh-century elite were of Romano-British descent, although adopting Germanic material culture.

Such notions have important implications. That occupation continued on many of these former elite sites beyond the end of high status activity suggests that, although many have focussed on the use of violence in the formation of regional hegemonies, the establishment of lordship may

[499] Christopher Scull and Gabor Thomas, 'Early Medieval Great Hall Complexes in England: Temporality and Site Biographies', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 22 (2020): 50–67.
[500] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*.
[501] These sites are marked by three or more finds in order to limit the impact of casual loss on the results.

have been marked by less conflict than many have argued.[502] The continued use of these sites also implies that they had many functions in contemporary society; had these settlements only been elite residences, abandonment after the elite were subordinated may be anticipated. That this did not occur implies that these sites were settlement and farming centres for a wider population.

Although there are limitations in the use of ploughzone datasets to understand social differentiation, not least the lack of secure contexts from which the material was derived, it is clear that Early Saxon social hierarchies are manifested in the ploughzone. In the fifth and sixth centuries, numerous sites were demarcated by elite indicators, reflecting autonomous tribal groupings. Significantly, the wealth and status of some sites appears rooted in the Late Roman past, suggesting some degree of continuity of authority. While the imprecise dating of many Early Saxon artefacts masks, to some degree, the precise chronology of the development of social differentiation, it is apparent that, by the later sixth century, markers of elite status were present at fewer locations in the landscape, coterminous with the establishment of Rendlesham as an elite centre. Such evidence suggests that many of these tribal units had, by this date, been brought under the overlordship of the nascent East Anglian kings.

Figure 6.16: high-status objects dating from the period *c.* 575-700 recorded with the PAS in the study area. Although each of these objects are suggestive of elite activity, some degree of social gradation is evident within this class of objects, which precious metal objects restricted to the highest rungs of contemporary society. **1.** SF-0646A8 gold pendant. **3.** SF-6BCD37 gilded copper alloy brooch. Images not to scale.

[502] Bassett, 'Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms', 3–27.

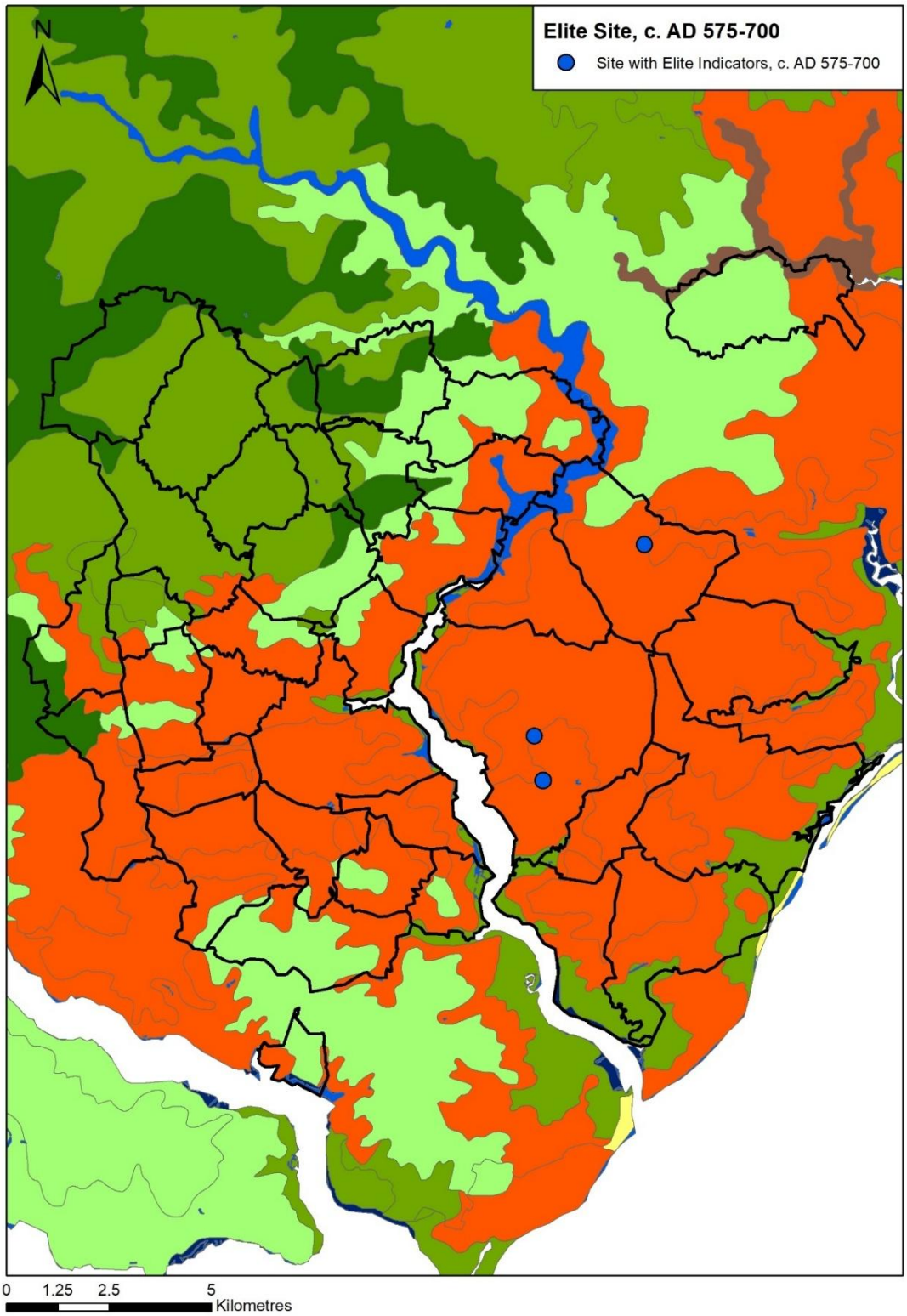

Figure 6.17: the distribution of late Early Saxon (c. 575-700) elite indicators. Elite activity was much more spatially restricted in this period. Source: DVSA, 1-37 and PAS.

Early Saxon Arable Farming

As noted above, the Early Saxon period witnessed a shift to a pastoral agricultural system, evidence for which is provided, in part, by the retrenchment of occupation to areas characterised by extensive grazing resources. This shift is also denoted by a substantial decline in the arable area. While at least 2,564 hectares of land were cultivated in the later Roman period, as little as 207 hectares may have been under the plough in Early Saxon East Suffolk, a decline of 92% (Figure 6.18). It is likely, however, that a larger area was under the plough but was manured through other means, such as directly by animals, while the friability and relative scarcity of Early Saxon pottery further suggests that ploughzone archaeology may understate the scale of post-Roman cultivation. Yet, even with this considered, the contraction of the cropped area remains significant, indicating an evident and enduring shift to livestock farming. This contraction in cereal production was likely facilitated by demographic decline and the removal of demands for Imperial taxation.[503] With a smaller population to feed, as well as little impetus to produce surpluses to pay taxes or sell at local market centres, livestock farming represented a less labour-intensive agricultural system through which high-quality foodstuffs could be produced. Such patterns were likely also influenced by the cooler, wetter climate of the Early Saxon period, conditions that are ill-suited to the production of grain crops but, instead, facilitate the growth of grass and pasture.[504]

Although it is largely accepted that this collapse in cultivation occurred in the fifth century, the methodology set out above enables this chronology to be refined. It has been suggested in Chapter Five that a substantial decline in arable farming occurred in the later fourth century, with only 52 hectares of cultivation datable to the Late Roman period by metalwork manuring scatters, although this, in all probability, represents an underestimate of the extent of cereal production. While caution must be taken when discussing the exact scale of this decline, it appears clear that the arable area at the turn of the fifth century was already significantly truncated compared to a century earlier; against this backdrop, the decline of cultivation in the Early Saxon period appears much less marked, representing the continuation, and perhaps acceleration, of later Roman patterns of agrarian change. Such notions have important implications. This decline in cultivation has been seen as a manifestation of discontinuity in the landscape.[505] While it is clear that the contraction of cultivation and the coterminous shift to livestock farming continued in the Early Saxon period, that this perpetuates earlier patterns

[503] Hamerow, *Rural Settlements*, 145.
[504] Dark, *Environment of Britain*, 27.
[505] Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*, 142–43.

again suggests that the fifth and sixth centuries witnessed a gradual and continued realignment of economic systems and restructuring of the landscape, as opposed to the sudden collapse of the Romano-British countryside.

Indeed, the very scale of arable cultivation in the Early Saxon period has been underplayed by many historians, with it often implied that arable agriculture was only a minor element of the rural economy compared to livestock farming.[506] While there was clearly a retrenchment in the arable area, at least 207 hectares of land were cultivated in the Early Saxon period, suggesting continued investment in arable farming, although it must be acknowledged that this represents only little over 4% of the total area surveyed. As noted above, however, the area under the plough was, in all likelihood, significantly larger than this. With a greater emphasis on livestock farming and, therefore, a larger number of livestock in the landscape, it is possible that direct manuring by animals comprised a greater share of the manure entering the fields, suggesting that ploughzone archaeology may understate the extent of Early Saxon arable farming. Such issues are further compounded by the friability of Early Saxon pottery.

This arable cultivation was, much like the settlement pattern, entirely riverine, likely due to the fertility and tractability of the soils found in such locations (Figure 6.19). This pattern may also derive from the distance decay model of manuring discussed in Chapter Two. As suggested above, the arable area manifested in the ploughzone is only that manured with household waste. Such manuring strategies are labour intensive, requiring sizeable investment of time and manpower to transport manure to arable fields; as such, manuring with household waste often took place in the area surrounding the farmstead, with land further from the settlement manured through other means. With settlement fixed into the valleys of rivers and streams, it is perhaps inevitable that the archaeologically visible cultivation and manuring of arable fields occurred in those areas closest to settlement.

[506] Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*, 75.

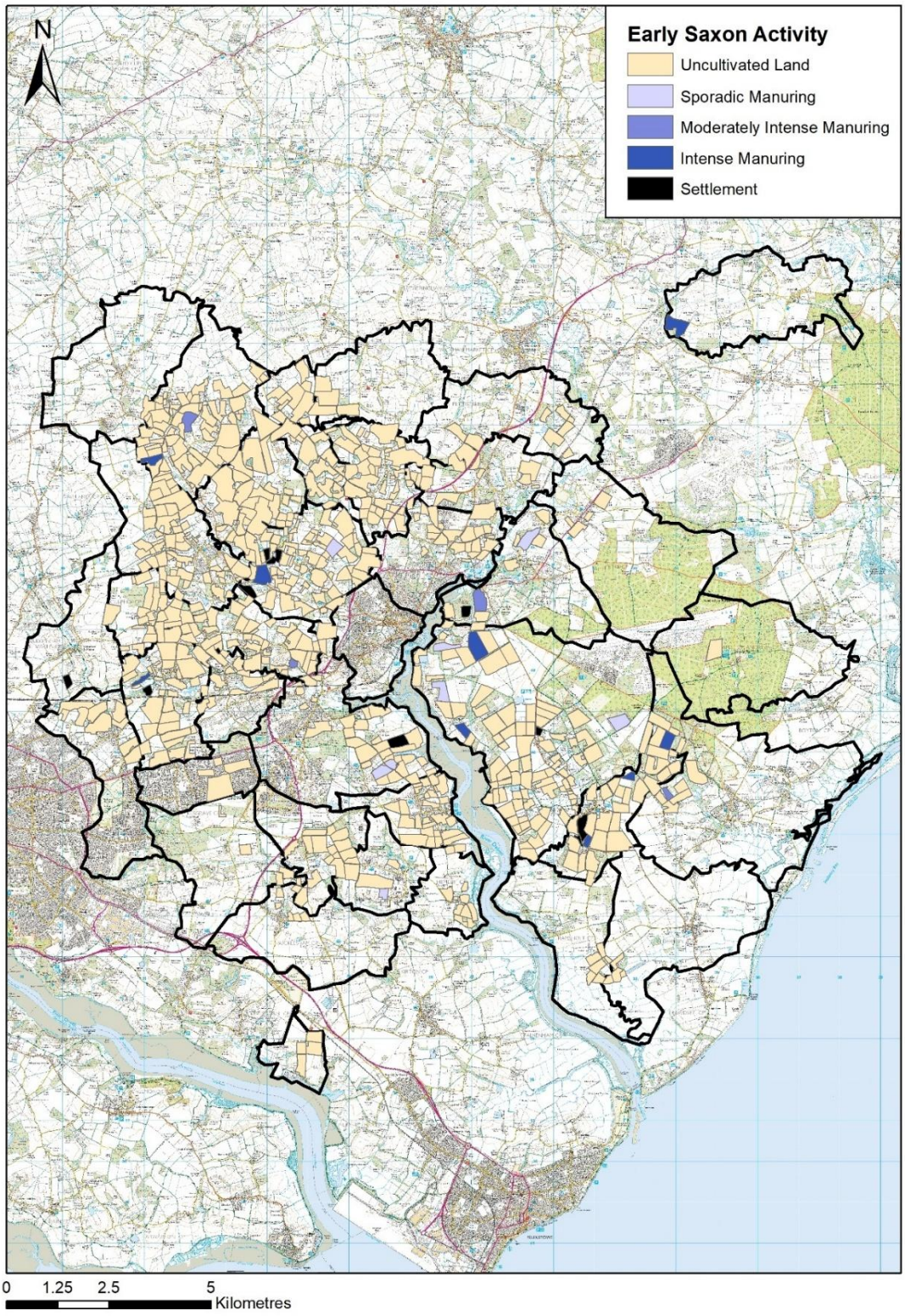

Figure 6.18: the extent of Early Saxon cultivation in the study area. It is clear that the agrarian economy of the Roman period almost entirely collapsed in the post-Roman period, denoted by a vast decline in the scale of cultivation, although such notions should not be overstated. Source: DVSA, 1-37.

This collapse of arable farming in marginal environments, particularly those areas of intractable, waterlogged clay, has widely been related to the decline and eventual loss of the heavy ploughing technology required to cultivate such landscapes.[507] While it is undeniable that ards predominated in the Early Saxon period, such arguments for a sudden loss of heavy ploughing technology are rather incongruent with the apparent evidence for a protracted period of change in the countryside. It has been suggested above that the retrenchment of arable farming in the Early Saxon period perpetuates later fourth-century transformations in agriculture. That these changes began in a period in which heavy ploughing technology *was* available to farmers suggests that the abandonment of settlement and cultivation in areas of heavy soil represents a conscious restructuring of agricultural systems, as opposed the abandonment of the claylands brought about by 'technical regression'.[508] The seventh-century Lyminge plough coulter corroborates such assertions. Although this was recovered from a high status royal and monastic settlement and, may, therefore, be atypical, that this equipment was in circulation in society, although socially restricted, implies that this technology, and the knowledge required to produce it, had not been lost.[509] In this context, the decline of arable farming, particularly in marginal areas of the landscape, appears a response to changing socio-economic circumstances, namely the decline of population and Imperial taxes, that rendered the cultivation of heavy soils both unprofitable and unnecessary. With little incentive to produce large surpluses of grain, farmers shifted to less intensive modes of production, such as livestock husbandry.

It can, of course, be suggested that arable agriculture may have extended into the uplands, but, as these areas were distant from settlement, these landscapes were manured directly by livestock, rather than through the spreading of household refuse, rendering any cultivation archaeologically invisible. Such notions are, however, unlikely. Within river valleys, areas favourable for cultivation, much unploughed ground could be found; it is unlikely that cultivation expanded into more marginal environments when fertile and workable soils remained locally available to be brought under the plough. While ploughzone manuring scatters denote only the

[507] Fowler, *Farming in the First Millennium*, 182–204. The presence of the mouldboard plough in Roman Britain is, however, debated, although the extent of cultivation in areas of heavy clay surely suggests the use of such technology. See Lisa Lodwick, 'Arable Farming, Plant Foods and Resources', in *The Rural Economy of Roman Britain*, by Martyn Allen et al., with Tom Brindle (The Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, 2017), 42–44.
[508] Williamson, *Sandlands*, 13.
[509] Gabor Thomas et al., 'Technology, Ritual and Anglo-Saxon Agriculture: The Biography of a Plough Coulter from Lyminge, Kent', *Antiquity* 90 (2016): 742–58.

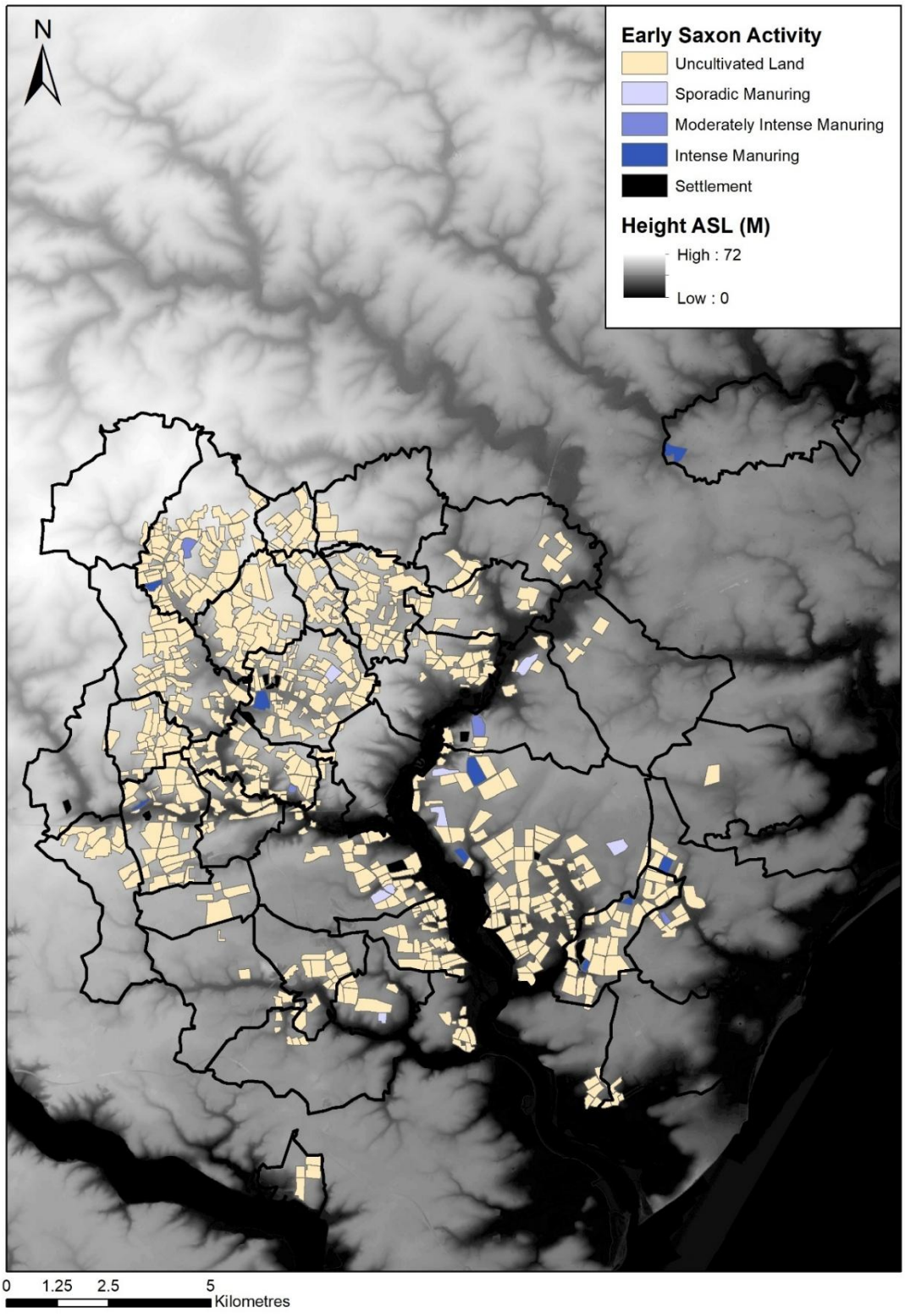

Figure 6.19: the extent of Early Saxon cultivation and its association with topography. Early Saxon agrarian farming was entirely riverine, located on the fertile, tractable slopes of river valleys which could be cultivated with the limited ploughing technology available to early farmers. Source: DVSA, 1-37.

minimum arable area, cultivation likely remained a phenomenon of the valley systems in which settlements were clustered, with the intractable clay interfluves, as well as the infertile plateau of the Sandlings, avoided by settlement and arable farming.

Early Saxon Livestock Husbandry

As has widely been acknowledged, the Early Saxon period witnessed a shift to less labour-intensive pastoral farming systems. Large expanses of uncultivated land are apparent in the study area, occupied by tracts of heath, woodland and wood pasture. While the majority of these grazing resources could be found on the interfluves, uncultivated ground extended into river valleys, attested by areas from which no manuring scatters have been recovered.

While the extent of arable cultivation declined in the post-Roman period, subregional, environmentally structured variations in manuring strategies are apparent; such patterns are congruent with those of the later Roman period, albeit in a more muted manner. The average area of intense Early Saxon manuring associated with individual settlements in parishes dominated by clay soils is significantly larger than in the Sandlings, by as much as 37%, while manuring scatters in the claylands are also characterised by a greater number of sherds (Figure 6.20).

Although it has been suggested that Early Saxon livestock were 'hefted' away from settlements,[510] such patterns imply the continued presence of stall-fed livestock in the claylands. Despite changes in agricultural practices and demographic decline, the manuring patterns laid out above suggest that High Suffolk remained a landscape of cattle farming, grazed seasonally on the wooded uplands before being stalled in barns and yards in the winter.[511] Indeed, it is in this context that the small spreads of handmade pottery in the claylands, such as in Clopton, may be seen, plausibly the residue of seasonal settlements associated with the management of herds of cattle. Such notions are corroborated by excavated assemblages, albeit from beyond the present study area. Although the number of excavated Early Saxon settlement sites with securely dated faunal assemblages in High Suffolk is relatively small, those that are present are dominated by cattle bones, suggesting the continuation of environmentally structured patterns of livestock husbandry. The faunal remains from Debenham, located at the head of the river Deben in the Suffolk claylands were, for example, exclusively comprised of cattle while the

[510] Hamerow, 'Overview: Rural Settlement', 122.
[511] Similar seasonal patterns of livestock husbandry have been noted elsewhere, such as Scandinavia. See Hans Antonson, 'The Open-Field Landscape in Two Swedish Provinces on the Fringe of Possible Cultivation', in *Peasants and Their Fields: The Rationale of Open-Field Agriculture, C. 700-1800*, ed. Christopher Dyer et al. (Brepols Publishers, 2018), 87–89.

number of cattle bones identified at the Hartismere High School site in Eye in the north of the county was almost twice that of sheep and pigs (Figures 6.21 and 6.22).[512] These examples are reflective of a wider pattern; each Early Saxon clayland faunal assemblage is dominated by cattle, suggesting the widespread continuation of later Roman patterns of livestock husbandry. While these animals were overwintered in stalls and yards, their manure was collected and mixed with household waste; such waste was then carted to arable fields to restore fertility. Although this refuse was marked by smaller quantities of pottery and metalwork than in preceding periods, owing to the scarcity and friability of contemporary ceramics and relative rarity of Early Saxon metalwork, environmentally structured livestock management patterns and manuring strategies persisted beyond the end of Roman Britain.

While the manuring patterns of Early Saxon High Suffolk imply the continued management of herds of cattle, including the stalling of animals over winter, the lack of excavated Early Saxon barns, stalls and sheds may be set against this to suggest that such patterns are more illusory than real. Indeed, the byres and longhouses of Continental Europe were conspicuously absent in Early Saxon England,[513] although the posthole building recently excavated at Eye may represent one such structure.[514] Such evidence can be taken to suggest that cattle were overwintered in their pastures, rather than in stalls and barns. Yet, although this lack of cattle sheds must be considered, the paucity of excavated byres does not necessarily imply that these patterns of livestock husbandry were not prevalent. The structures used to house cattle over winter need not be substantial, with little more than four posts and a roof required to provide adequate shelter. It is plausible that enigmatic spreads of postholes, such as those at Chalton, Hampshire, and Witton may represent such structures.[515] Indeed, it is tempting to speculate that some excavated buildings identified as domestic halls, particularly those subdivided structures lacking hearths, may have functioned as barns, stables or cattle sheds.[516] While the lack of

[512] Simon Cass, *Cherrytree Inn, Debenham DBN 132 Archaeological Monitoring*, Unpublished Report (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, 2012), 51; Jo Caruth and Richenda Goffin, *Land South of Hartismere High School, Eye, Suffolk, EYE 083, Post-Excavation Assessment Report*, Unpublished Report (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, 2012), 205. For the association between areas of clay soil and cattle farming, see Rippon et al., *Fields of Britannia*, 314; Terry O'Connor, 'Animal Husbandry', in *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, ed. David A. Hinton et al. (Oxford University Press, 2011), 372.
[513] Hamerow, 'Anglo-Saxon Timber Buildings', 129.
[514] Caruth and Goffin, *EYE 083*, 34–35.
[515] See P. V. Addyman and D. Leigh, 'The Anglo-Saxon Village at Chalton, Hampshire: Second Interim Report', *Medieval Archaeology* 17 (1973): 1–25; Lawson, *Witton*, 69.
[516] Helena Hamerow, 'The Archaeology of Early Anglo-Saxon Settlements: Past, Present and Future', in *Landscapes of Change: Rural Evolutions in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Neil Christie (Ashgate, 2004), 311.

excavated structures associated with cattle farming must be acknowledged, this need not discount the presence of the aforementioned patterns of livestock husbandry.

Although it was once suggested that sizeable woodland regeneration occurred in the post-Roman period,[517] paleoenvironmental evidence from the claylands has suggested that the spread of woodland in the fifth and sixth centuries was much more limited, although some regeneration did occur.[518] The continued grazing of cattle on the clay uplands further suggests that the extent of this regeneration may have been limited. While the plateau was no longer a focus for settlement and arable agriculture, these environments were still managed and exploited, subject to 'extensive, rather than intensive use'.[519] Herds of cattle were grazed in the bosky wood pastures, punctuated by larger stands of trees that were managed for fodder, fuel and timber. This exploitation of the interfluves is corroborated by thin scatters of Early Saxon metalwork, particularly personal possessions such as brooches, recovered from the plateaux, indicative of casual losses made while managing herds of cattle (Figure 6.23).[520] The uplands were marked by 'a decrease in the intensity with which the landscape was exploited' but were not abandoned.[521]

[517] Hoskins, *Making of the English Landscape*, 44.
[518] Rippon et al., *Fields of Britannia*, 170–75.
[519] Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 82.
[520] See, for example, PAS SF-6F1ACD. Indeed, the propensity for detectorists to search for 'hotspots', suggests that evidence of this activity may be present more widely but may not be recovered.
[521] Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*, 166.

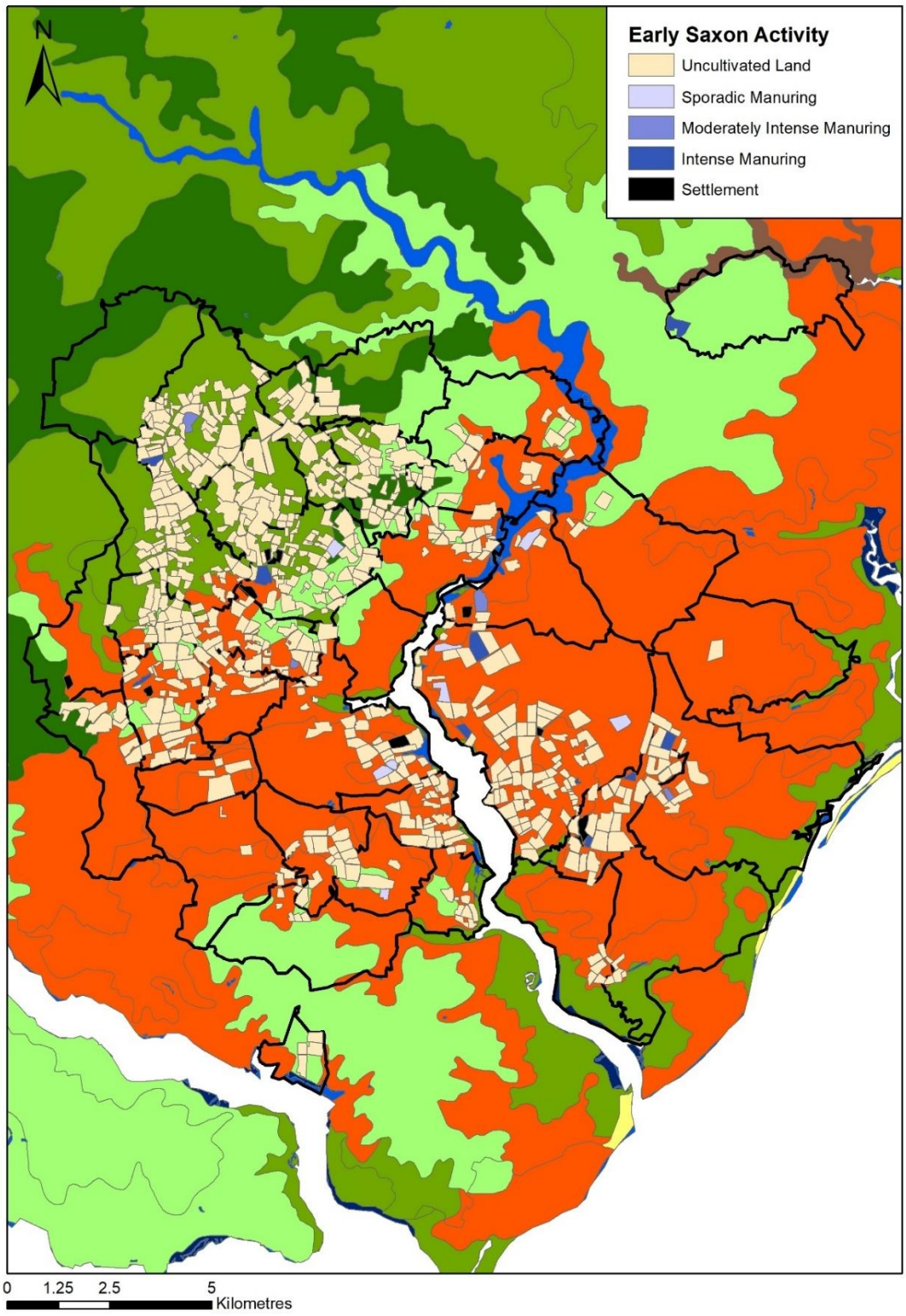

Figure 6.20: the extent of Early Saxon cultivation and its association with the varied soils of the study area. Cultivation continued in the claylands, although this was restricted to patches of amenable soils, often located in the valleys of rivers and streams. Source: DVSA, 1-37.

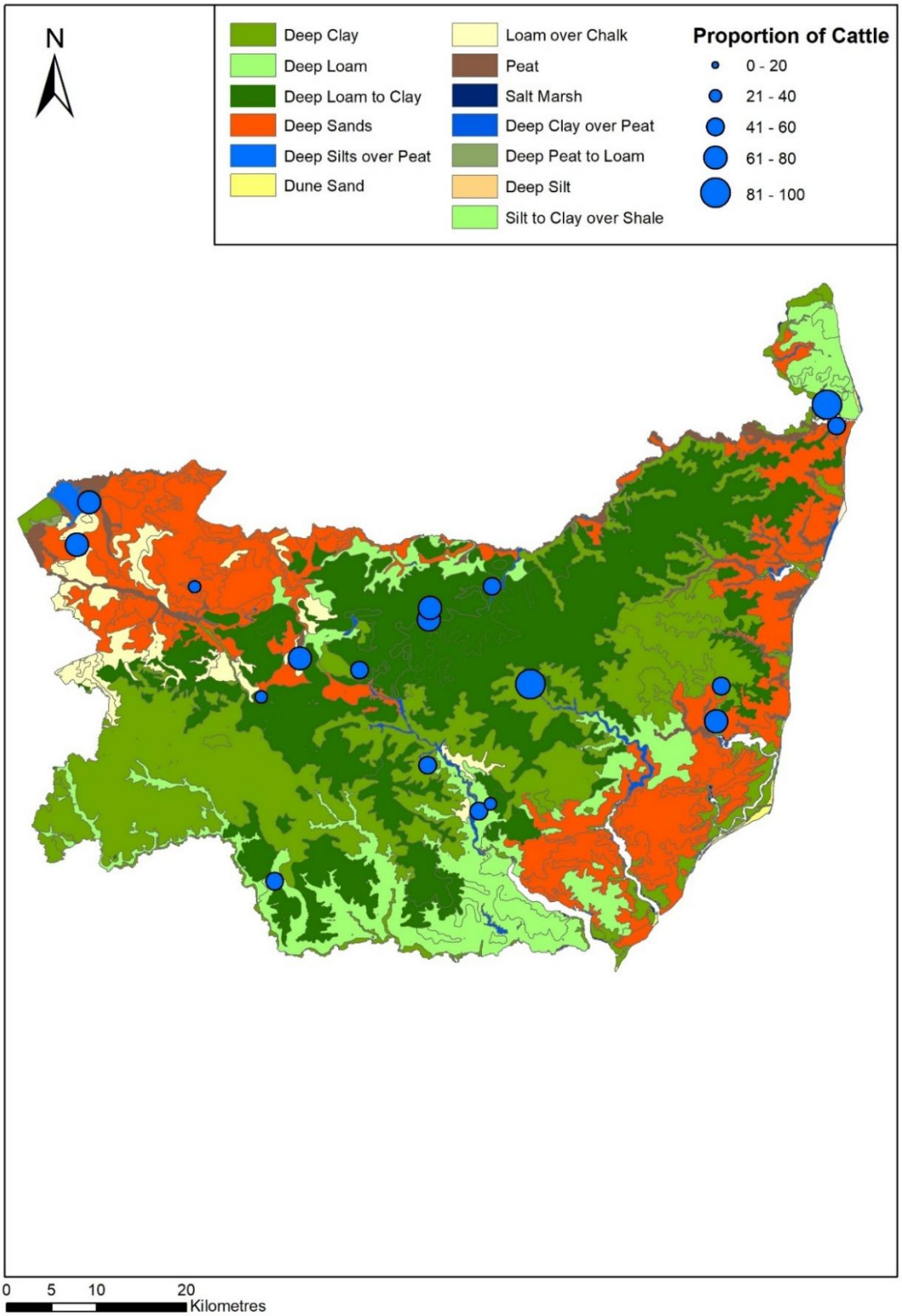

Figure 6.21: the proportion of cattle in excavated Early Saxon faunal assemblages as a percentage of the three main domesticates from 'grey literature' excavation reports. Although cattle are overrepresented in faunal assemblages owing to their size and patterns of butchery, it is evident that the number of cattle was greatest in the claylands, while large numbers of cows were also grazed in the Fens in the northwest of the county (after Anderson and Muldowney, 2011; Cass, 2012; Clarke, 2017; Crabtree, 1989; Crees, 2023; Ennis, 2016; Fern, 2022; Forshaw, 2017; Germany, 2019; Goffin and Caruth, 2012; Lucy *et al,* 2009; Mustchin, 2013; Mustchin and Bull, 2018; Mustchin and Walker, 2016; Newman, 2012; Pooley, 2013; Scott, 2018).

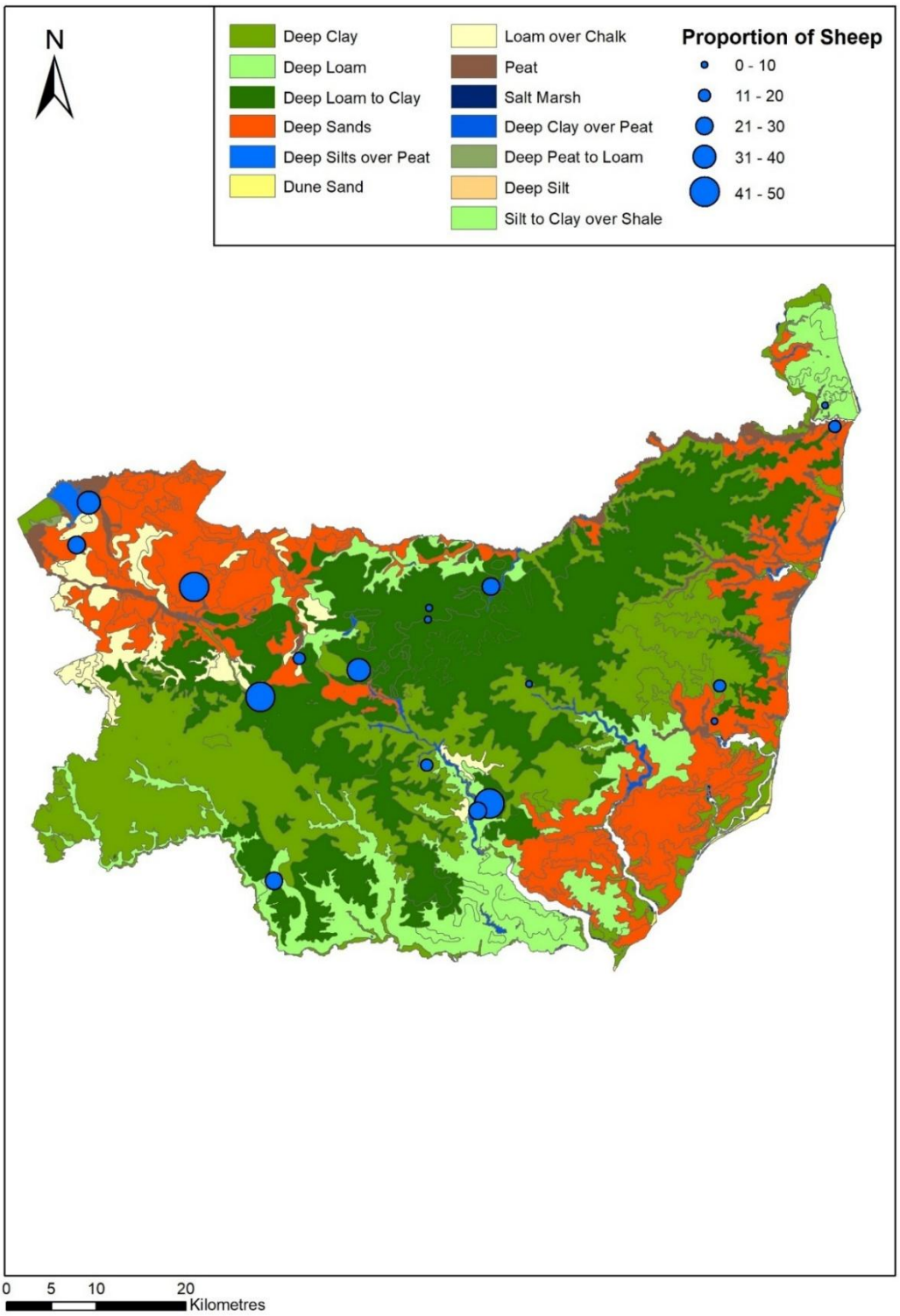

Figure 6.22: the proportion of sheep in excavated Early Saxon faunal assemblages as a percentage of the three main domesticates from 'grey literature' excavation reports. It is clear that the greatest number of sheep in excavated faunal assemblages occur in areas of light soil such as Breckland, or areas overlying chalk, such as in the southwest of the county (after Anderson and Muldowney, 2011; Caruth and Goffin, 2012; Cass, 2012; Clarke, 2017; Crabtree, 1989; Crees, 2023; Ennis, 2016; Fern, 2022; Forshaw, 2017; Germany, 2019; Lucy *et al,* 2009; Mustchin, 2013; Mustchin and Bull, 2018; Mustchin and Walker, 2016; Newman, 2012; Pooley, 2013; Scott, 2018).

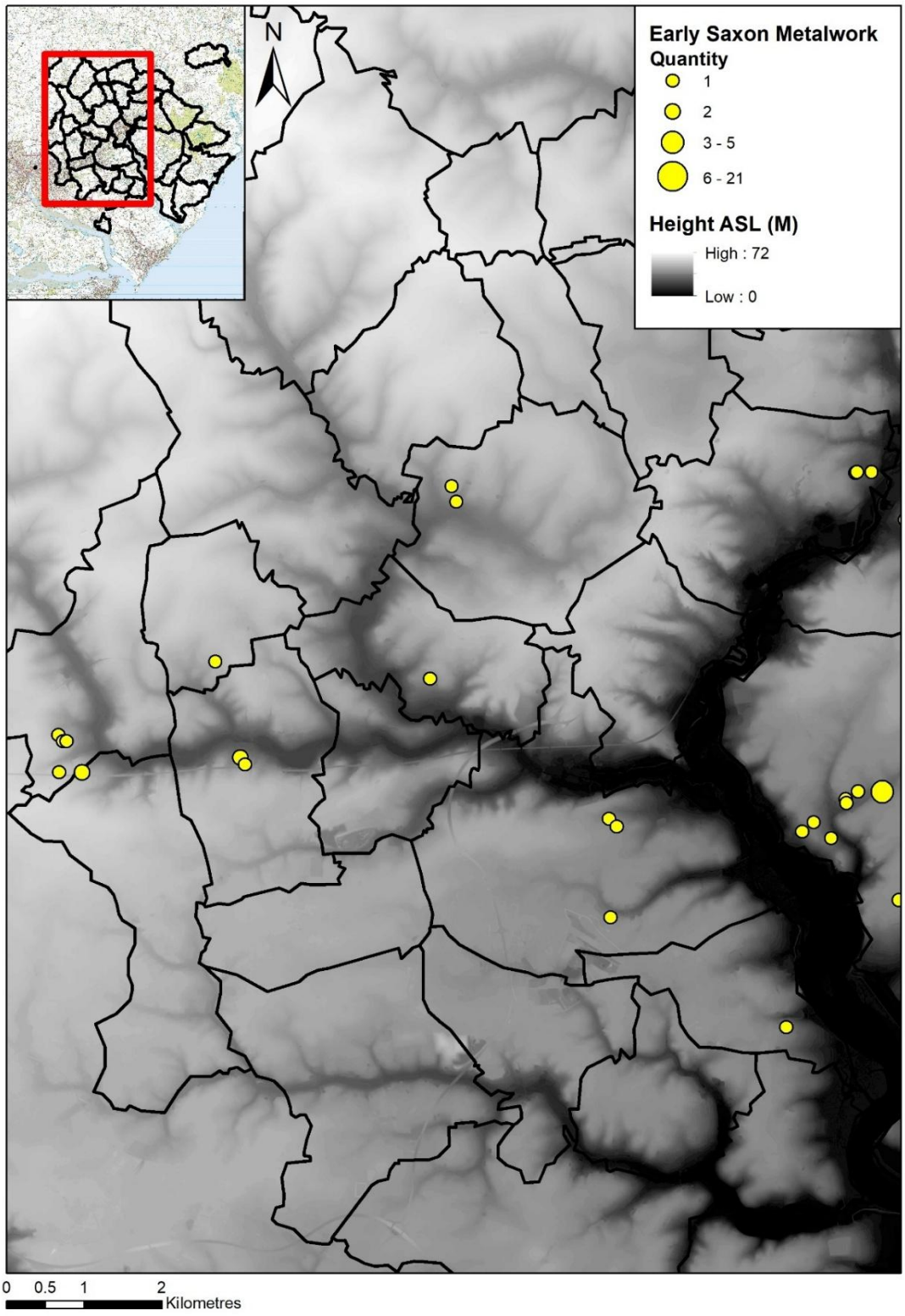

Figure 6.23: the distribution of Early Saxon metalwork in the north of the study area. Scatters of metalwork extend onto the plateau, suggesting that such environments were used for the grazing of livestock, predominantly cattle in the claylands. Source: PAS.

Figure 6.24: PAS SF-DB1AEB copper alloy Early Saxon cruciform or small-long brooch recovered distant from settlement, likely representing a casual loss made while managing herds of livestock. Such brooches are associated with female graves; the relative frequency with which such objects are recovered from the upland wolds perhaps implies some gendering of agricultural work in contemporary society.

The continued overwintering of cattle in barns and yards has further implications for the development and management of meadows. It has long been asserted that the intensive management of meadows to provide crops of hay was abandoned in the fifth century, only reemerging in the Middle Saxon period.[522] Such notions are attested by pollen samples recovered from sites such as Yarnton.[523]

Yet, if it is true that considerable numbers of cattle were kept in stalls throughout the winter, then it is arguable that riverine meadows may have been intensively managed earlier than is often acknowledged to facilitate this. Such notions are corroborated by scatters of metalwork in the study area. Spreads of Early Saxon artefacts have been recovered from the margins of areas of meadow in the claylands, consistent with the continued management of these landscapes to produce crops of hay.[524] It is plausible that leafy hay may have contributed a substantial proportion of winter fodder for cattle in this period, cut from trees and hedges. Indeed, in areas in which large areas of wood pasture were available, less emphasis could be placed on the management of meadows to feed cattle during the colder months. Yet, if cattle were stalled in barns and yards as implied by the manuring patterns laid out above, it can be argued that meadows were managed earlier than previously suggested to provide sustenance for these herds over winter.[525] Significantly, the Laws of Ine suggest that meadowland was systematically managed in the late seventh century;[526] such laws may record earlier practices, the descendent of later Roman farming traditions. Mark McKerracher has suggested that livestock lived longer lives in the Middle Saxon period, a trend he associates with the increasing

[522] Hamerow, *Rural Settlements*, 148.
[523] Hey, *Yarnton*, 47.
[524] The number of finds from meadowland is limited by both the patterns of searching by detectorists and the masking of archaeological material by alluvial deposits. See Robbins, 'Past to Present', 93–95, table 4.2.
[525] McKerracher, *Farming Transformed*, 66.
[526] Dorothy Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents Vol 1: Antiquity to Early Medieval C. 500 - 1042* (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1955), 364.

exploitation of meadowland; it is here argued that the livestock husbandry systems of Early Saxon East Suffolk imply that this management of riverine grassland for hay production may have a longer history.

Farming practices in the Sandlings also continued in line with their predecessors, remaining a countryside of sheep farming, with extensive flocks grazed on the heaths by day before being driven to arable land at night; the manure of these animals was directly applied to fields, leaving little opportunity for pottery and metalwork to become incorporated. As such, ploughzone manuring scatters are, on average, both smaller and more diffuse than their clayland counterparts. This is not to suggest that midden material was not employed as manure in the

Figure 6.25: the level, bosky uplands of the claylands of the study area. Such areas, in the Early Saxon period, carried expanses of woodland and wood pasture that were grazed by herds of cattle.

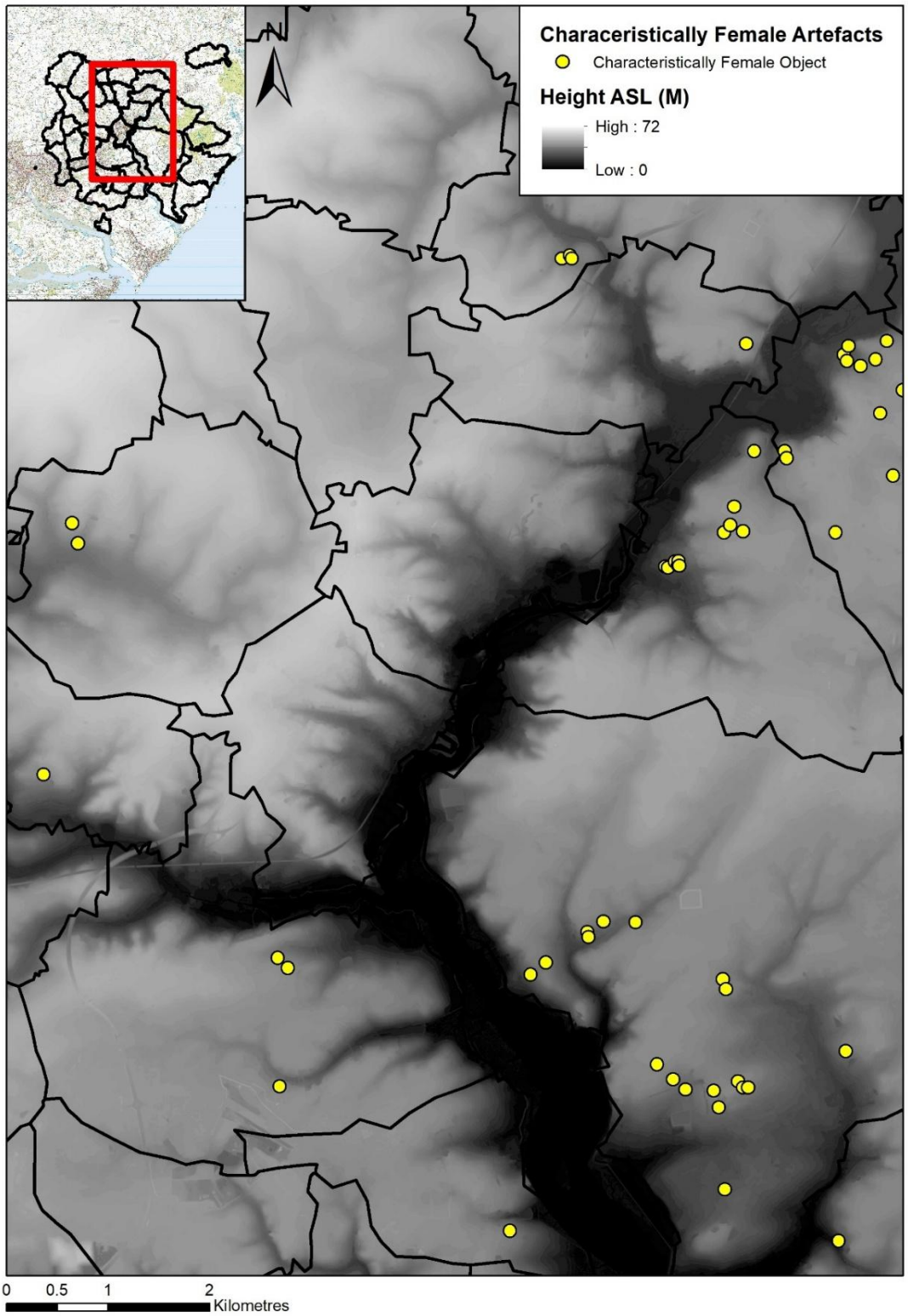

Figure 6.26: the distribution of typically female objects in the area surrounding Grundisburgh. These scatters extend onto the interfluves, suggesting that women may have been largely responsible for the management of livestock. Source: PAS.

Early Saxon Sandlings; the numerous manuring scatters recovered by Newman in parishes dominated by sand suggest that household and farmyard waste was indeed employed to restore fertility to arable land. The use of this material was, however, unlike in the claylands, secondary to direct manuring by sheep.

Scatters of Early Saxon metalwork from the study area further corroborate the persistence of these patterns of livestock management. Spreads of metalwork have been recovered from the interfluves, attesting the continued exploitation of these landscapes for fuel, timber and grazing for livestock. These scatters are, as in the later Roman period, both more numerous and comprised of a greater number of objects in the Sandlings than in the claylands. Although such patterns may, in part, derive from the density of occupation and activity in the Sandlings, these scatters may also reflect the frequent movement of livestock in these landscapes. While clayland cattle were moved seasonally, the sheep of the Sandlings were herded daily from riverside settlements and fields to upland pastures; such increased movement presented greater opportunities for objects to be lost and incorporated into ploughzone assemblages.

Interestingly, these metalwork scatters provide evidence of the gendering of agricultural work in the Early Saxon period. Although the impact of recovery bias on the types of objects recorded with the PAS must be acknowledged,[527] the spreads of metalwork from the 'wolds' are comprised of characteristically female objects, such as brooches and wrist clasps; such objects have widely been recovered from female furnished burials and are interpreted as a key signifier of gender in the Early Saxon period (Figures 6.24 and 6.26).[528] The recovery of these from the interfluves in High Suffolk may imply that the management of livestock was a predominantly female task.

Up to this point, the management of sheep has only been considered in terms of two of the products provided by these animals, meat and manure. Sheep were, however, also managed for their wool, associated with the self-sufficient textile production evidenced by the large numbers of spindle whorls and weaving tools recovered from excavated settlements.[529] While sheep were

[527] Owing to the tendency of detectorists to discriminate against iron objects, some categories of typically male artefacts may be overlooked in metal detecting assemblages.
[528] Nick Stoodley, *The Spindle and the Spear: A Critical Enquiry into the Construction and Meaning of Gender in the Early Anglo-Saxon Burial Rite* (Tempus Reparatum, 1999). See, for example, PAS SF-F6FBD3.
[529] West, *West Stow*, *Vol 1*, 139.

largely reared for meat, as evidenced by kill patterns, the importance of wool and weaving to Early Saxon life should be acknowledged.[530]

Such notions should not, however, be taken too far. The extent of wool production may have been exaggerated by issues of recovery; weaving equipment, such as spindle whorls, are durable and easily recognised in archaeological deposits. The frequency with which these objects are encountered in excavations may, therefore, be a consequence of their archaeological visibility. Indeed, the importance of wool production in East Anglia may have been overstated by the environmental contexts of those most widely published Early Saxon sites. West Stow, Bloodmoor Hill and Brandon have all been highlighted as centres of wool production; each of these sites are, however, located on light, acidic soils, dominated by heathland, precisely those landscapes in which sheep were extensively managed.[531] It is, therefore, unsurprising that these settlements were engaged in textile production. Perhaps significantly, spindle whorls, and indeed sheep bones in faunal assemblages, occur less frequently in settlements excavated in those areas more suited to cattle farming, suggesting that the management of flocks of sheep may have been less extensive in such landscapes.[532] The apparent significance of wool and textile production in the Early Saxon period may, therefore, derive from biases in the literature, as opposed to any real historic pattern.

Conclusion

The countryside of Early Saxon East Suffolk was characterised by a dispersed, riverine settlement pattern akin to a truncated version of that of the later Roman period. There was a dramatic decline in settlement density and, perhaps, population, in the Early Saxon period; yet, viewed in the context of the late fourth century retrenchment of settlement laid out in Chapter Five, the landscape of the fifth and sixth centuries appears to represent the realignment of what came before, as opposed to its wholesale eradication. Despite changes in the scale of occupation and landscape exploitation, significant strands of continuity remained woven throughout the countryside. A sizeable proportion of Early Saxon settlement sites were located on or adjacent to areas of later Roman occupation; such a pattern may suggest widespread continuity of

[530] Pam Crabtree and Douglas Campana, 'Wool Production, Wealth, and Trade in Middle Saxon England', in *Animals and Inequality in the Ancient World*, ed. Benjamin Arbuckle and Sue McCarty (University Press of Colorado, 2014), 341.
[531] Crabtree and Campana, 'Wool Production'.
[532] Only 3 loom weights were recovered from the Eye site, for example, while 88 were recovered from West Stow. See Caruth and Goffin, *EYE 083*, 106–7; West, *West Stow, Vol 1*, 139–40.

occupation as well as settlement location, while those settlements established on previously unoccupied sites may represent farmsteads created by incoming groups.

It has long been asserted that the claylands were wholly abandoned as a result of settlement change, demographic decline and changes in agricultural practices. While it has here been demonstrated that the very heaviest soils were abandoned as a focus for settlement and arable agriculture, occupation in High Suffolk continued on patches of light, easy to work soils located in river valleys. Although this has often been viewed in the context of the decline of heavy ploughing technology, the abandonment of settlement and cultivation on the interfluves can profitably be viewed as a conscious response to changing socio-economic conditions, structured by the local environment.

The decline of arable farming and coterminous growth of livestock husbandry has long been recognised. Such notions find manifestation in the area here studied, with a drastic decline in the arable area. Yet, this must not be taken too far. Large quantities of land and labour was given over to arable agriculture, with at least 207 hectares of the countryside, and in all likelihood more, under the plough.

Despite these changes in settlement, economy and agriculture, environmentally structured continuities in livestock husbandry and manuring strategies are evident. The importance of cattle in the claylands persisted beyond the fifth century, evidenced by the sizeable quantities of domestic waste that entered arable closes surrounding occupation sites. The Sandlings, meanwhile, remained a landscape of sheep farming, with extensive flocks grazed on the heaths before being folded on arable fields in order to manure these intensively cropped closes. Such direct manuring formed the primary manuring strategy in these areas, while the spreading of household waste, although apparent, was of lesser importance.

Chapter Seven: The Middle Anglo-Saxon Landscape of East Suffolk, *c*. 700-850

Middle Saxon Settlement Expansion

It has long been suggested that the Middle Saxon period witnessed substantial demographic change, marking the beginning of 'unabated population growth' that continued into the High Middle Ages.[533] Yet, in the study area, the associated expansion in the number of occupation sites appears much more muted. Eleven Middle Saxon settlements are evident, representing only a 10% increase in settlement density compared with the Early Saxon period, although metalwork scatters suggest the presence of perhaps three further occupation sites (Figure 7.1).[534] The Middle Saxon settlement density in the study area appears less than one settlement per 4.5km^2, implying that the scale of occupation had not reached the heights of the later Roman period, despite some degree of demographic growth.

This figure likely represents a significant underestimate of the true scale of settlement expansion, however. As will be discussed below, the Middle Saxon settlement pattern is somewhat congruent with that of the present day, suggesting that much evidence of occupation may be masked by currently occupied farmsteads and parish churches and their churchyards, a notion corroborated by the recovery of Ipswich ware from churchyards such as Sutton, as well as from settlement centres elsewhere in Suffolk.[535] These sites may only be attested by manuring scatters extending beyond the non-arable area, as at Clopton, Brightwell Hall and Seckford Hall (Figures 7.3 and 7.4). If these pottery scatters adjacent to currently occupied settlement and non-arable land-use are considered as evidence of occupation, a further eighteen settlement sites may be identified in the study area, increasing the Middle Saxon settlement density to as much as approximately one settlement per 1.5 km^2.

[533] Wright, *'Middle Saxon' Settlement*, 25.
[534] Such notions are based upon a small dataset of Middle Saxon settlements.
[535] Middle Saxon material was recovered from currently occupied settlement in Coddenham, for example. See Carenza Lewis, 'Exploring Black Holes: Recent Investigations in Currently Occupied Rural Settlements in Eastern England', in *The Landscape Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Martin J. Ryan and Nicholas J. Higham (Boydell & Brewer, 2010), 90.

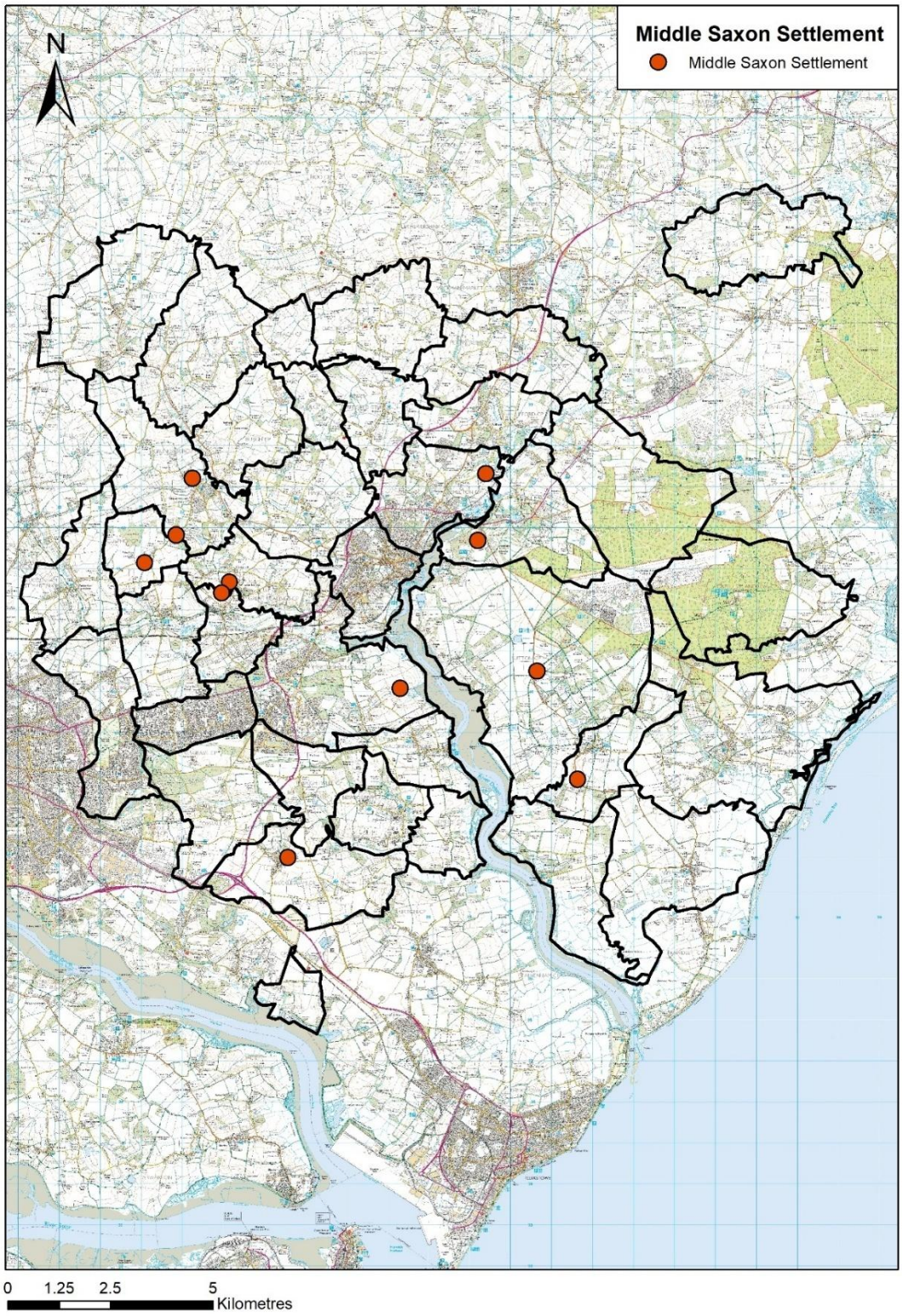

Figure 7.1: the distribution of ceramically attested Middle Saxon settlement in the study area. Source: DVSA, 1-37.

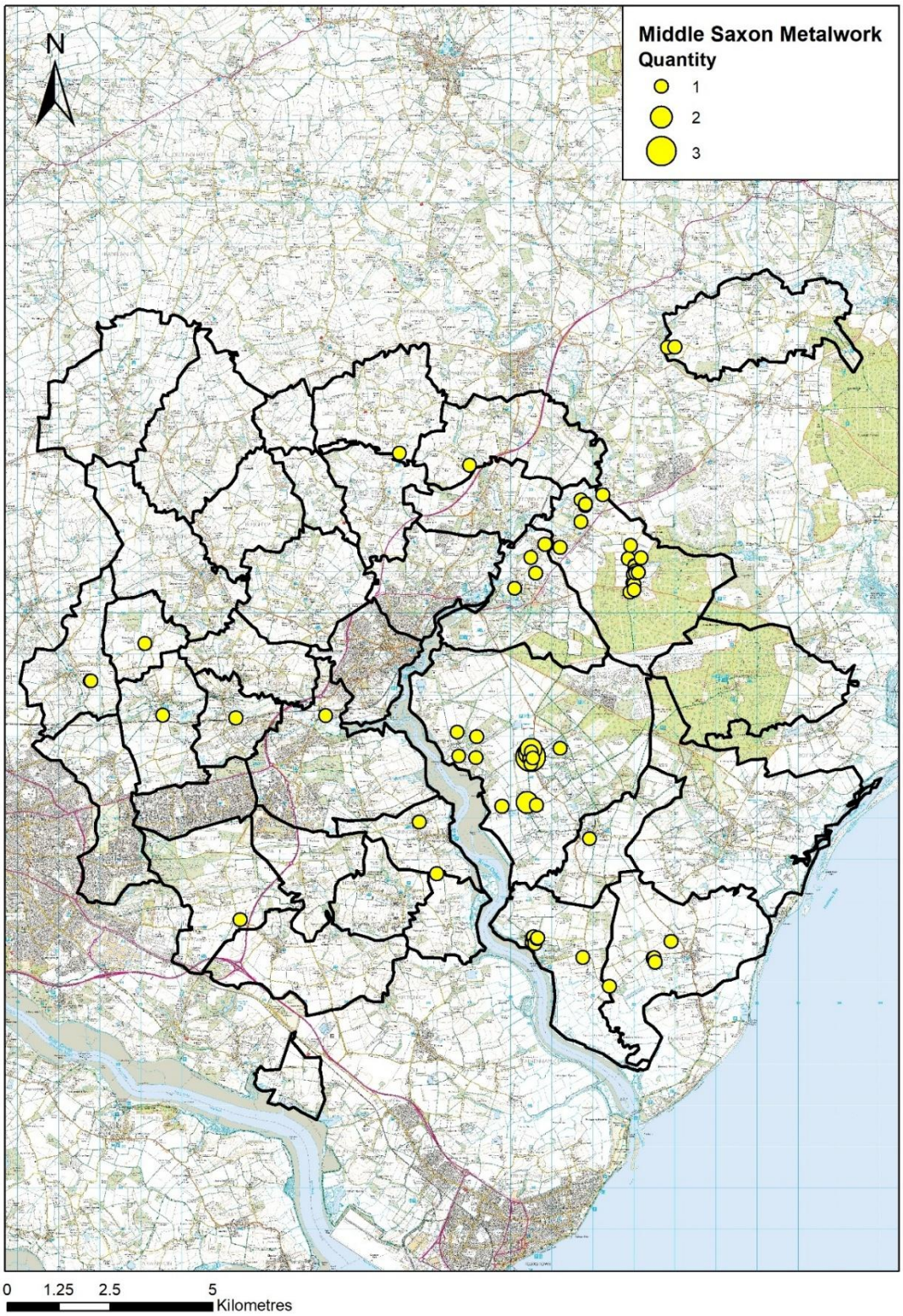

Figure 7.2: the distribution of Middle Saxon metalwork in the study area. Source: PAS.

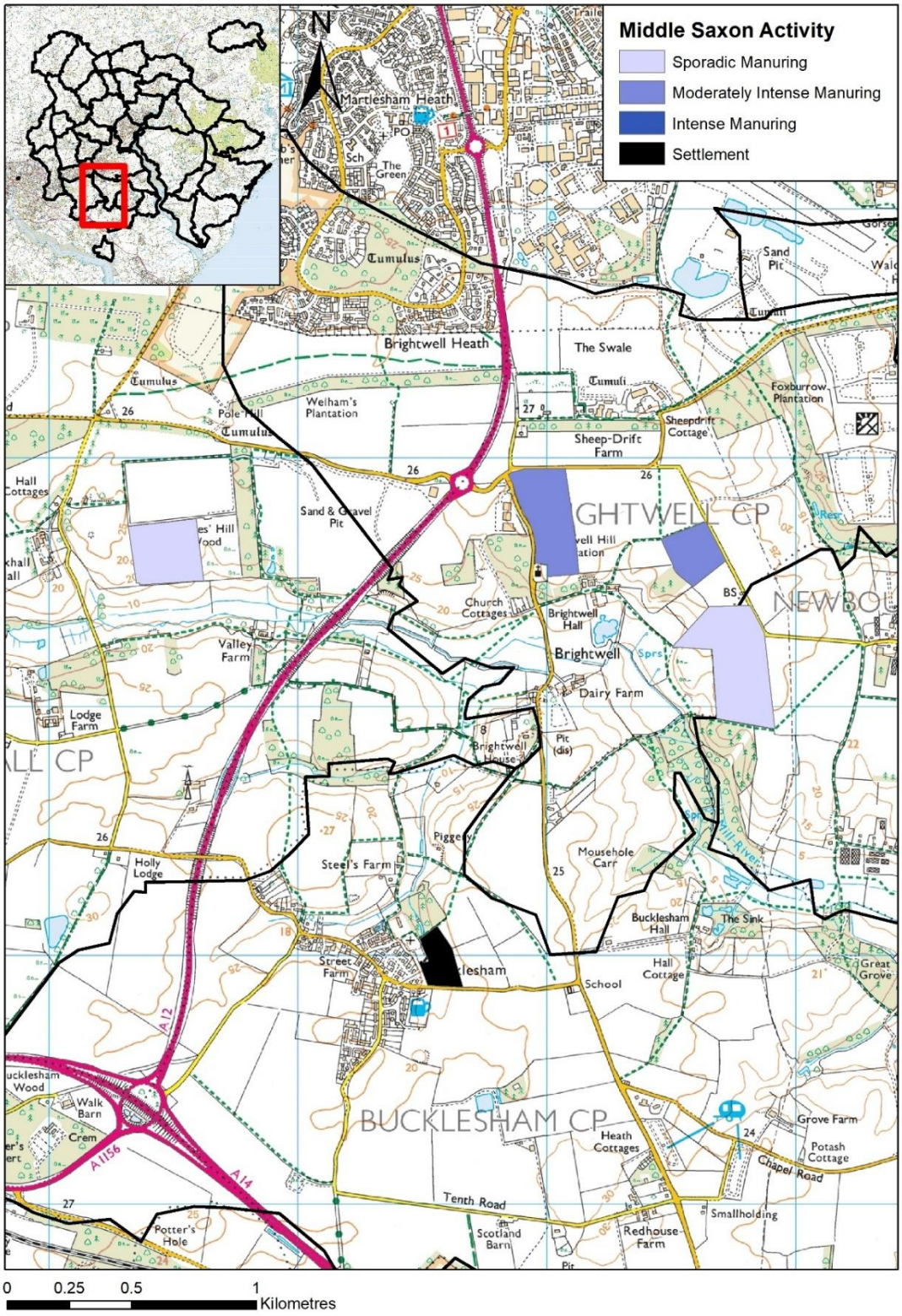

Figure 7.3: the distribution of Middle Saxon pottery surrounding Brightwell Church and Hall. Such evidence clearly suggests that a Middle Saxon settlement lies beneath the non-arable land-use surrounding the parish church. Source: DVSA 5, 7, 15, 23 and 25.

Figure 7.4: the parish church at Shottisham (centre) surrounded by non-arable land use. Middle Saxon settlement in the parish is masked by later patterns of land use, with occupation only attested by an Ipswich ware manuring scatter extending into adjacent arable fields. Image reproduced by kind permission of John Fielding. © John Fielding.

The Landscape Context of Middle Saxon Settlement

These settlements were, in both the claylands and the Sandlings, largely huddled in the valleys of rivers and streams (Figures 7.5 and 7.6). As in previous periods, this pattern is likely the result of environmental factors, with these locations providing access to a wide range of agrarian resources. Although it will be proposed below that the proliferation of heavy ploughing equipment may have been slower than has previously been argued, the increasing use of this technology may have encouraged settlement to remain fixed in river valleys. Heavy ploughs require large teams of oxen for traction; these animals must be kept in good condition over winter to enable spring cultivation as soon as weather conditions allow. [536] As such, the importance of riverine meadows may have grown, managed for hay to enable herds of cattle and oxen to be maintained throughout the winter. Although it has been posited above that the presence of stall-fed livestock in the Early Saxon claylands implies the intensive management of valley floor grassland in the immediate post-Roman period, the proliferation of the mouldboard

[536] Williamson, *Shaping*, 120–21.

plough may have fixed settlement in the landscape adjacent to these meadows in order to facilitate the rapid and efficient management of hay crops.

Occupation in the Middle Saxon period also extended onto the interfluves for the first time since the fourth century, albeit in a limited manner (Figure 7.7). In Culpho, for example, farmsteads were perched on the clayland plateau, while isolated manuring scatters suggest the presence of further settlement on the interfluves in parishes such as Clopton. This occurred in areas in which the plateau is most dissected, again offering access to a wide suite of environmental resources. The Middle Saxon settlement pattern of East Suffolk resembled a truncated version of that of the later Roman period, with settlement largely concentrated in valleys, while, in the claylands, small numbers of settlements extended onto the interfluves.

The 'Middle Saxon Shift'

The 'Middle Saxon shift' model is well entrenched within academic tradition. It was noted as early as 1963 that the settlement pattern of Early Saxon England was not congruent with that of the eleventh century,[537] a notion subsequently brought to the fore by Arnold and Wardle. It was suggested that significant settlement change occurred in the seventh and early eighth centuries, with the transient farmsteads of the Early Saxon period, located in environmentally marginal contexts, abandoned in favour of 'more suitable locations', particularly in river valleys and areas of heavier, fertile soils.[538] These ideas have subsequently been refined, and much evidence supporting the 'Middle Saxon shift' model has been presented.[539] Indeed, Newman suggested that a similar period of settlement change occurred in East Suffolk, arguing that 'very few' Early Saxon settlements continued to be occupied beyond the end of the seventh century.[540] These ideas are not, however, universally accepted.[541]

[537] Peter Hunter Blair, *Roman Britain and Early England, 55 BC - AD 871* (Norton, 1966), 269–70.
[538] Arnold and Wardle, 'Settlement Patterns', 148.
[539] Such abandonment is evident at excavated sites such as Bishopstone, Sussex and Eynsham, Oxfordshire. See Hamerow, 'Settlement Mobility', 13.
[540] Newman, 'Late Roman', 34.
[541] Williamson et al., *Champion*.

Figure 7.5: a tributary of the river Deben in Ufford. Even these minor water courses attracted concentrations of settlement.

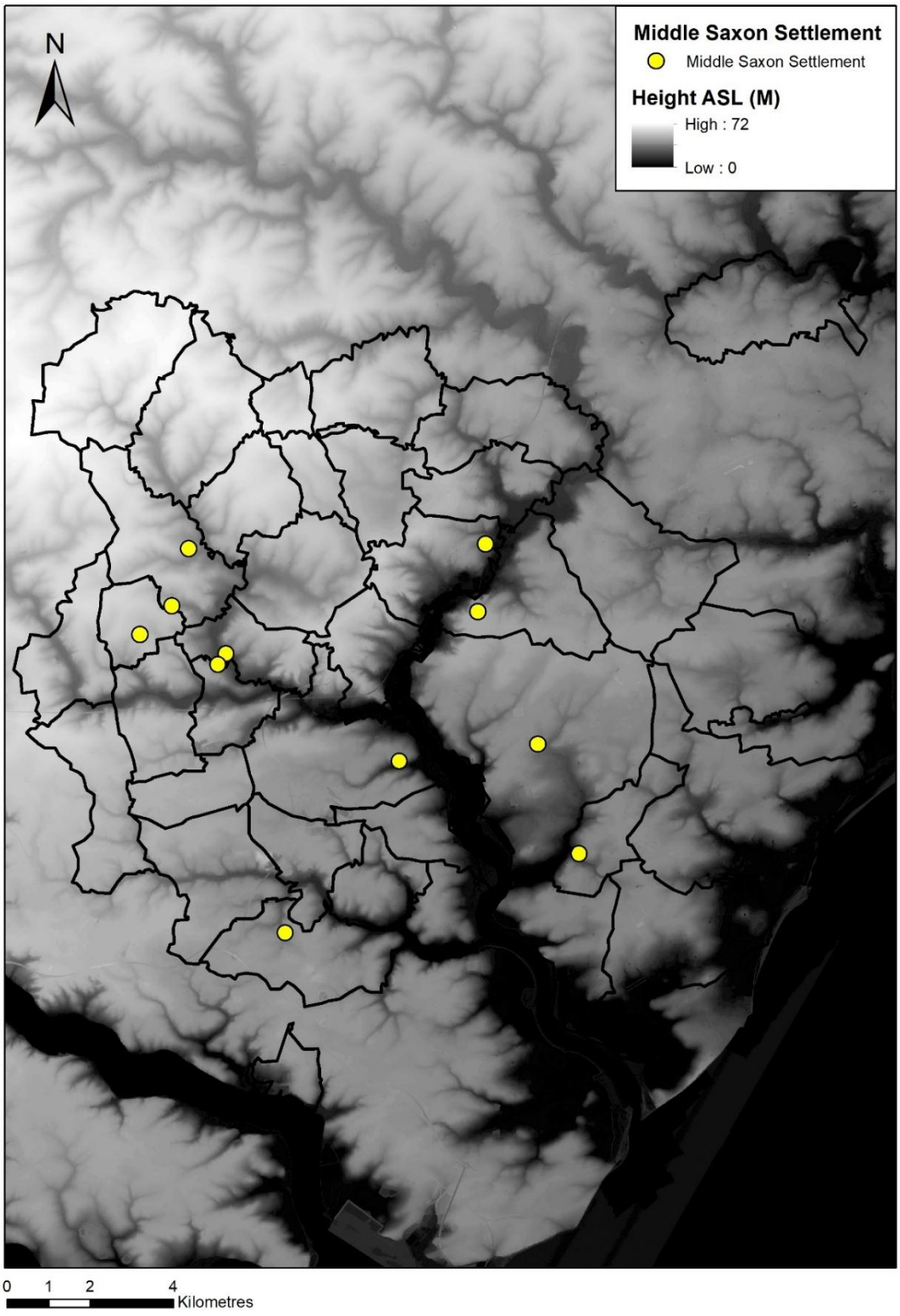

Figure 7.6: the distribution of ceramically attested Middle Saxon settlement in the study area and its association with topography. Middle Saxon settlement occupied a more diverse range of environmental contexts compared to previous centuries. Source: DVSA 1-37.

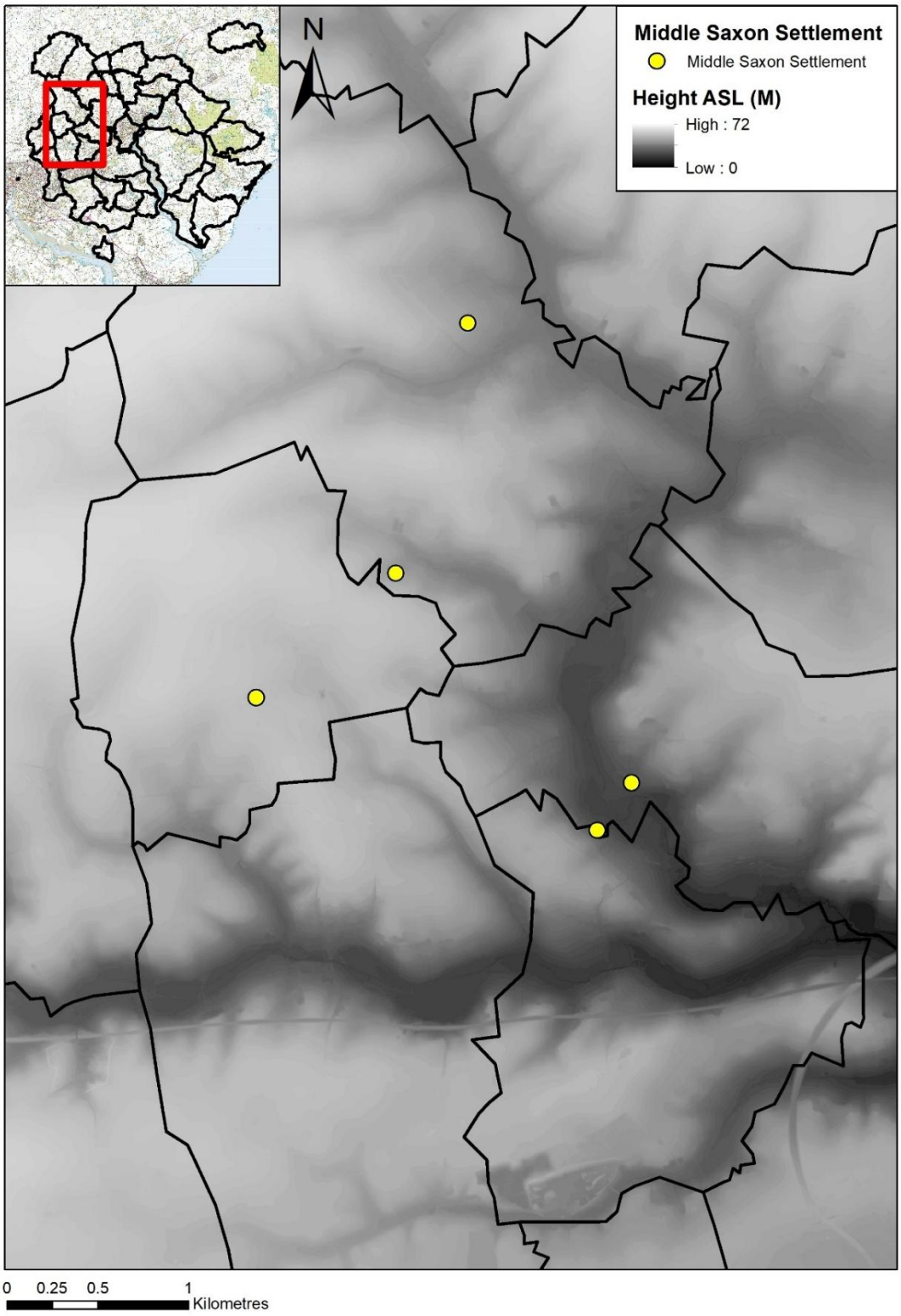

Figure 7.7: the location of the Middle Saxon settlements in the area surrounding Culpho. It is clear that the Middle Saxon period witnessed the reemergence of settlement on the interfluves, although this occurred only in those areas of dissected topography. Source: DVSA 5, 7, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 25, 28 and 36.

The 'Middle Saxon shift' model is inherently intertwined with ideas surrounding settlement nucleation, with the abandonment of occupation sites in the seventh and early eighth centuries suggested to be coterminous with the coalescing of farmsteads into agglomerated settlements. Indeed, Rippon has uncritically employed the arguments of Newman as evidence for such a period of settlement movement in Northern East Anglia.[542] These nucleated settlements developed into the villages of the English Midlands, while the agglomerations of farmsteads in East Anglia subsequently underwent a further period of dispersal from the eleventh century. The chronology of this settlement change is, however, debated; while some have suggested that the 'long eighth century' witnessed substantial transformations in the settlement pattern, others have posited a much longer period of nucleation beginning in the Late Saxon period, somewhat bewilderingly termed the 'village moment'.[543] This lack of clarity derives, in part, from the reliance upon poorly dated pottery scatters to understand settlement change; such issues are particularly significant in much of the Midlands, where the handmade pottery adopted in the immediate post-Roman period continued in use into the ninth century.

This tripartite process of Middle Saxon settlement change, namely the abandonment of Early Saxon occupation sites, the resettlement of the claylands, and settlement nucleation, has often been discussed as inextricably linked. Yet, there appears no reason why such changes could not occur independently of each other and, as such, each will be discussed individually below.

Settlement Stability and the Middle Saxon Shift

Although the number of Ipswich ware scatters recovered from Early Saxon settlements was significantly understated by Newman,[544] some degree of settlement dislocation in the Middle Saxon period is apparent. Seven (64%) Middle Saxon sites were founded in virgin landscapes while 6 (60%) Early Saxon settlements were apparently not occupied into the Middle Saxon period;[545] such evidence seemingly reflects a substantial period of settlement change in the late seventh or eighth century (Figures 7.8 and 7.9).

Metalwork from the study area offers, however, the opportunity to refine this chronology. Although the association between settlements and Middle Saxon metalwork is limited,

[542] This chronology was, however, refined by Rippon, owing to the revised chronology of Ipswich ware. See Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*, 187.
[543] Lewis et al., *Village, Hamlet and Field*.
[544] Newman, 'Late Roman', 34.
[545] Those Early Saxon settlements considered here to have been abandoned are those from which insufficient Middle Saxon pottery has been recovered to meet the settlement threshold outlined above, although diffuse scatters of Ipswich ware have been recovered from some of these areas. This figure also includes settlements that were abandoned during the Early Saxon period.

metalwork scatters from the survey parishes imply a longer period of settlement change than is often suggested.[546] Evidence for a late seventh-century date of abandonment is indeed forthcoming, with the Playford site deserted in the last decades of the seventh century, for example. Yet, other sites suggest that this settlement dislocation occurred much later. The large spread of Early Saxon metalwork in Blaxhall is marked by a limited scatter of material extending into the ninth century, while the Bromeswell site was apparently occupied into the last decade of the eighth century at the earliest. While it is largely accepted that the settlement pattern underwent a significant period of change in the later seventh and early eighth centuries, and indeed such notions are, to some degree, supported by the present study, it is clear that this abandonment was part of a much longer pattern of settlement change in East Suffolk.[547]

Although a degree of settlement dislocation occurred in the late seventh and early eighth centuries, this was not universal; substantial strands of continuity remained woven throughout the landscape. Four (36%) Middle Saxon settlements were located in areas of antecedent occupation, as at Martlesham and Sutton. Indeed, scatters of metalwork from the wider study area further corroborate this continuity. The Eyke site, located at the head of the Butley River was, for example, occupied in the Early Saxon period, marked by a sizeable spread of metalwork. Settlement continued throughout the Middle Saxon period, with a large scatter of Late Saxon and High Medieval metalwork suggesting long-term continuity of occupation in the area. In essence, settlement dislocation and discontinuity was not ubiquitous in the late seventh and early eighth centuries.

Indeed, this settlement change can, in light of the patterns of occupation and abandonment laid out above, be viewed as evidence of continuity, reflecting the enduring, subtle patterns of settlement growth and decline evident since the later Roman period. Settlement in East Suffolk has long been liable to drift throughout the landscape, remaining fixed in the countryside before being abandoned in favour of new sites; this 'Middle Saxon shift' must be viewed in the context of the wider patterns of settlement change evident since the third century.

[546] Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*, 187.
[547] Again, such notions are founded upon a limited number of settlement sites.

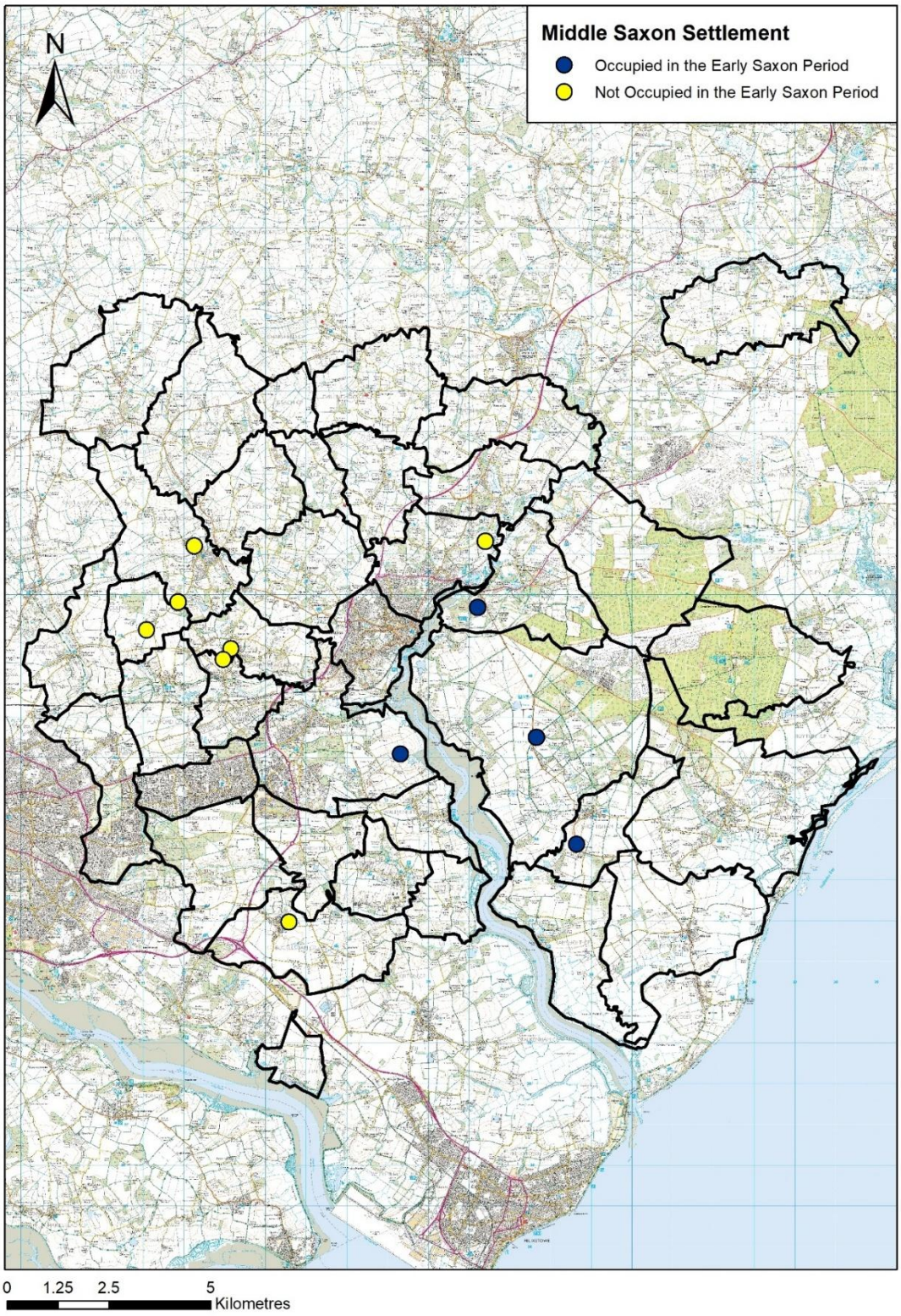

Figure 7.8: the distribution of Middle Saxon settlement in the study area and its association with antecedent occupation. Source: DVSA 1-37.

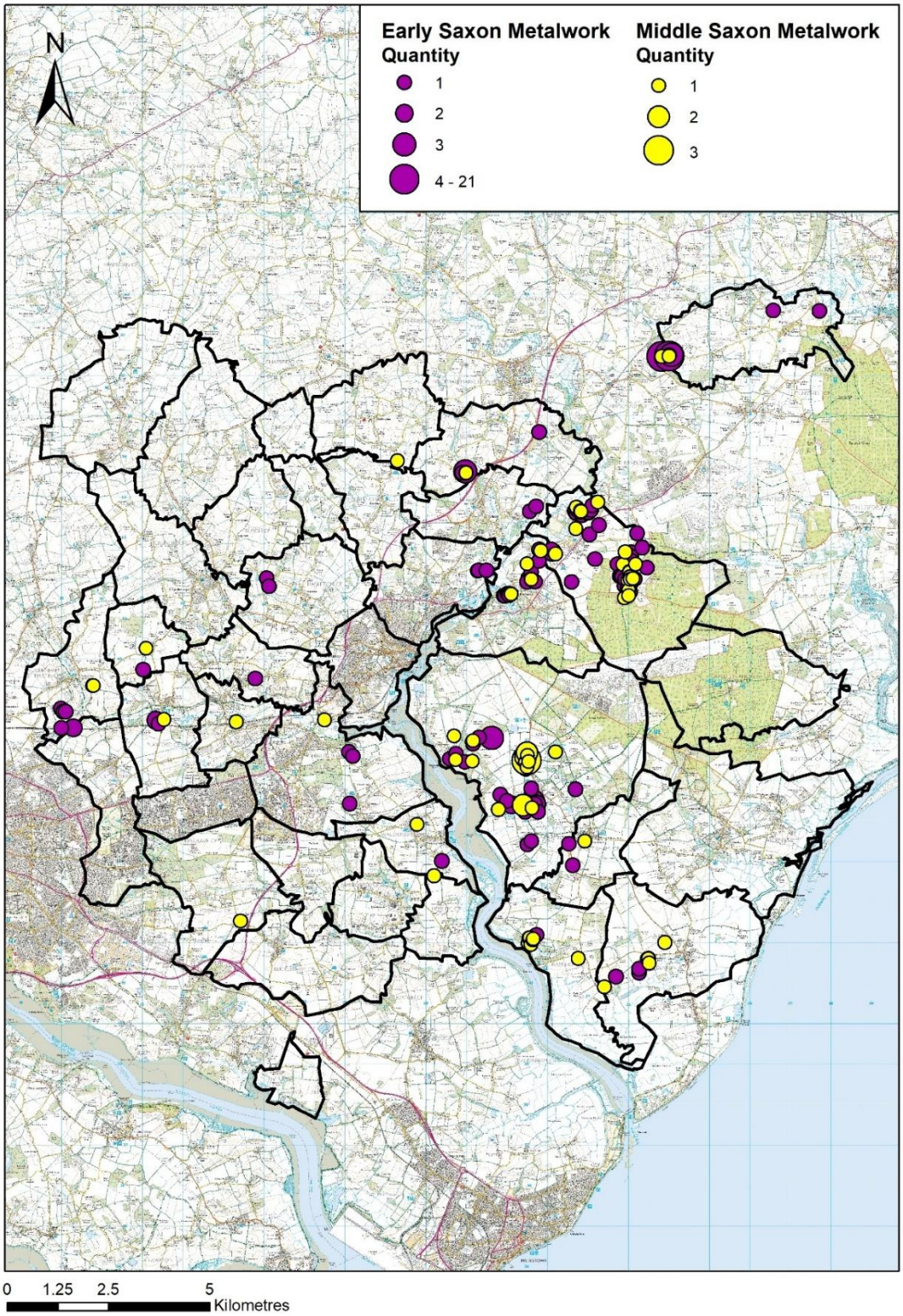

Figure 7.9: the distribution of Early and Middle Saxon metalwork in the study area. While continuity of activity is evident in some areas, other sites were clearly abandoned during the course of the Middle Saxon period. Source: PAS.

The Recolonisation of the Claylands

The recolonisation of the claylands in the 'long eighth century' is widely acknowledged.[548] Indeed, many have implied that the settlement of heavier soils, those apparently abandoned in the fifth century, was somewhat of a defining characteristic of the Middle Saxon period, a settlement shift that influenced, and was indeed influenced by, changes in social structure and agricultural practices.[549] Newman identified such patterns in East Suffolk, suggesting that the claylands were 're-colonised' in the seventh and eighth centuries;[550] such notions have since been accepted with little challenge, becoming a foundation upon which much of current understanding of Middle Saxon landscape change has been built.[551]

The claylands of the study area were evidently more intensively occupied than in the Early Saxon period, with 27% of Middle Saxon settlements located on clay soils, an increase of 7% compared to preceding centuries (Figure 7.10), while thin scatters of Ipswich ware extending from currently occupied farmsteads attest the presence of a further five clayland settlements, suggesting that High Suffolk was clearly subject to a greater degree of occupation and exploitation than in previous centuries. The increasing colonisation and cultivation of clay soils has often been viewed in terms of the reintroduction of the heavy ploughing technology that enabled the cultivation of these areas.[552] Yet, this technology had been in circulation, albeit in socially restricted contexts, in the latter decades of the Early Saxon period, as attested by the Lyminge coulter; further factors clearly influenced the expansion of clayland settlement.

The increase in clayland occupation was, at a most basic level, driven by population growth. Although this demographic change was apparently less marked than has widely been suggested, it is plausible that the claylands were resettled for the first time as the Sandlings began to 'fill up'.[553] Indeed, this increasing population may also have encouraged the cultivation of the claylands. The production of cereal crops enables greater quantities of food to be produced from

[548] Indeed, the recolonisation of these clay soils is implicit in the 'Middle Saxon shift' model.
[549] Hamerow, '"FeedSax"', 3–24.
[550] Newman, 'Late Roman', 34.
[551] McKerracher, *Farming Transformed*, 35.
[552] See Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*.
[553] Newman, 'Late Roman', 32.

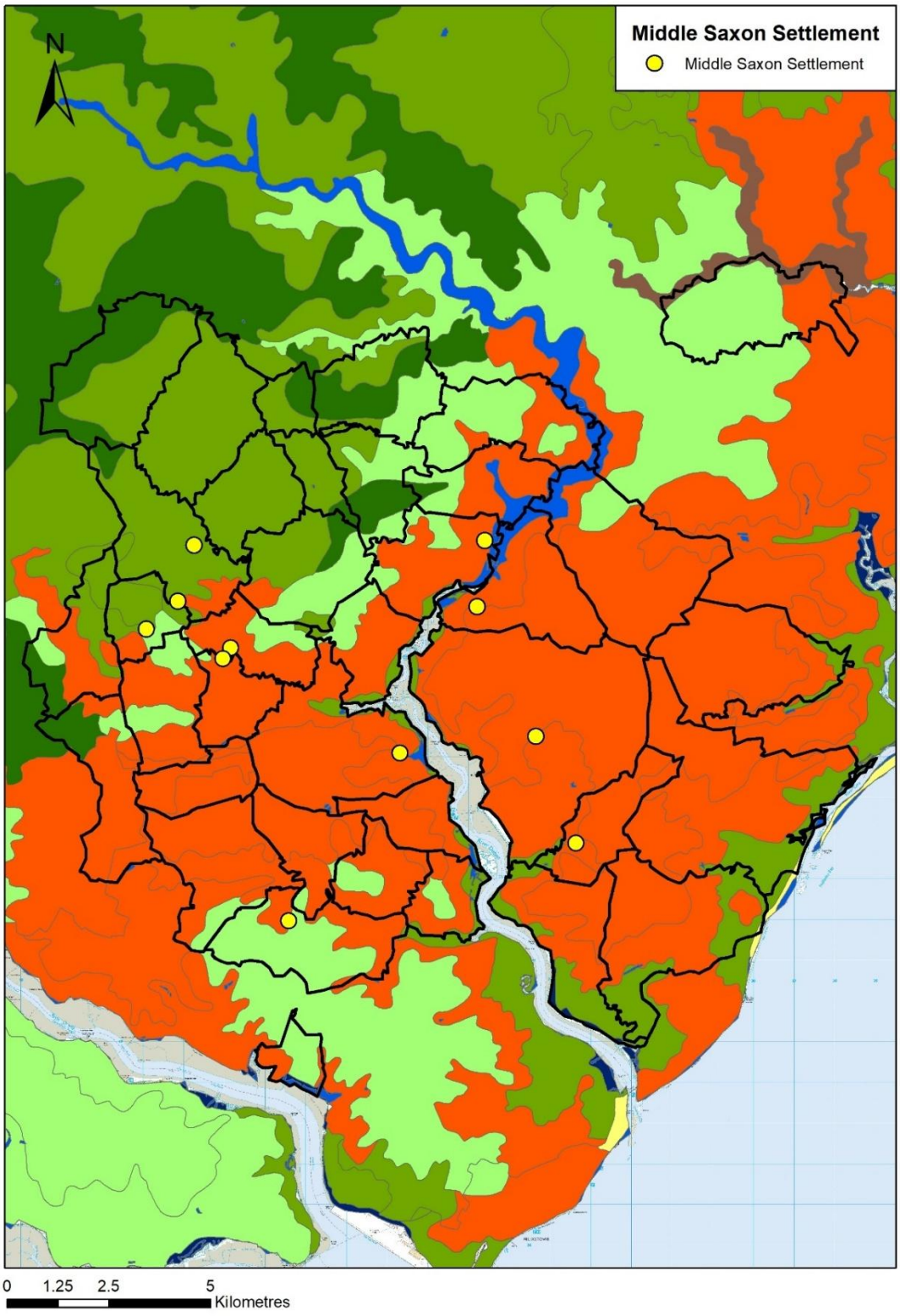

Figure 7.10: the distribution of Middle Saxon settlement in the study area and its association with the dominant soils of the region. Although the claylands were exploited to a greater extent than in previous centuries, the Sandlings remained the focus of settlement in Middle Saxon East Suffolk. Source: DVSA 1-37.

smaller areas of the landscape compared with livestock farming.[554] The claylands are more suited to arable farming than the Sandlings; the settlement and cultivation of High Suffolk may, therefore, have emerged as a response to increasing demands for food from the growing population.

There are, however, significant issues with current understanding of the Middle Saxon exploitation of clay soils. Hamerow has argued that the Middle Saxon period witnessed agricultural extensification, with farming becoming centred around the cultivation of large expanses of the claylands in less labour-intensive ways than in previous centuries, producing greater quantities of food than previously possible on the lighter soils of river valleys and areas dominated by sand.[555] Although much support has been given to these ideas, there are significant issues with this interpretation, perhaps most substantially that arable farming in the claylands was more labour intensive than in the Sandlings. In order to successfully produce grain crops, clay soils require ploughing, often repeatedly, manuring by hand rather than directly by animals, as well as drainage ditches to be dug and cleaned.[556] Each of these tasks requires greater labour inputs in the claylands than the Sandlings; ploughing only once and direct manuring by animals are possible on soils formed in sand, while drainage ditches are not required on such free-draining soils. While the increasing cultivation of the claylands may have been intertwined with 'extensification', that is, the expansion of arable cultivation at the expense of rough grazing and waste, this required a greater input of labour, rather than a shift to less labour-intensive arable husbandry systems.

More fundamentally, the suggestion that the claylands were recolonised in the Middle Saxon period is predicated on the assumption that these resource rich landscapes were wholly abandoned in the immediate post-Roman centuries, a notion that has been shown in Chapter Six to be in need of revision. Rather than the reoccupation and exploitation of apparently virgin landscapes, the Middle Saxon period witnessed changes in the manner of exploitation, namely an increase in arable cultivation, alongside an increase in settlement in these areas.

The claylands are also often treated as a homogenous whole in much of scholarship, with little discussion of the nuances of soils and topography. It has widely been implied that the entirety of the claylands were resettled in this period, including the waterlogged intractable

[554] Colin R. W. Spedding et al., *Biological Efficiency in Agriculture* (Academic Press, 1981), 355.
[555] Hamerow, '"FeedSax"', 4.
[556] Williamson, 'Agriculture, Lords and Landscape', 219–20.

interfluves.[557] Yet, a cursory examination of the settlement pattern of the study area suggests that such notions oversimplify the complexities of Middle Saxon occupation. While settlement did indeed expand in High Suffolk, distinction should again be drawn between the very heaviest clay soils and areas of riverine lighter soil in such areas. Settlement and cultivation evidently shifted to the upland plateau in the claylands in a way not evident in Early Saxon East Suffolk. Yet only a single settlement was perched upon the interfluves; the majority of farmsteads in clayland parishes remained riverine in a form much akin to the Early Saxon period. Clayland occupation remained, on the whole, confined to those areas of dissected countryside in which bands of light, workable soils could be found, the cultivation of which is attested by scatters of pottery spread along the valley sides.

Furthermore, the very scale of this resettlement has been vastly overstated. While more settlements were located in areas dominated by clay soils than in preceding centuries, the focus of Middle Saxon occupation in East Suffolk remained the Sandlings, with 73% of all settlements situated on acidic, sandy soils.[558] Such notions are corroborated by metalwork from the study area. Only 7% of all Middle Saxon metalwork was recovered from the claylands, suggesting that the extent of activity in such landscapes was limited compared to the Sandlings.[559] Although the exploitation of the claylands clearly increased compared to the Early Saxon period, this did not result in the wholesale abandonment of areas of lighter, infertile soil as is often implied.

It is worthwhile to briefly explore the factors underpinning this continuation of occupation in the Sandlings. It has been argued that the cultivation of the claylands was coterminous with the rapid expansion of cereal production; that settlement and cultivation persisted in the Sandlings suggests that 'cerealisation' occurred over a much longer period.[560] It is plausible that those settlements in areas dominated by clay soil were occupied by farmers who shifted to producing cereal crops, while those that remained in the Sandlings continued to operate a mixed farming system.

The protracted period of clayland colonisation may also be intertwined with the slow adoption of the mouldboard plough. Although heavy ploughing technology has been identified in a late

[557] McKerracher, for example, fails to draw distinction between the areas of heavy, waterlogged soils on the interfluves and patches of riverine lighter soils throughout McKerracher, *Farming Transformed*.
[558] Only 53% of the area surveyed by Newman was characterised by acid sands, suggesting that such patterns are indeed real, rather than the result of recovery bias.
[559] 31% of metalwork dating from all periods was recovered from the claylands, suggesting that the lack of Middle Saxon metalwork from those parishes dominated by clay derives from a real lack of activity as opposed to recovery bias.
[560] Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*, 39.

seventh-century context, this evidence was recovered from a high status settlement; the wider proliferation of the mouldboard plough may have been slower, perhaps not complete until the Late Saxon period or beyond.[561] Those farming clay soils, particularly on the upland plateaux, may have had access to improved agricultural technology, perhaps through the patronage of local lords or monastic institutions, while those that remained in the Sandlings or clustered on light, riverine soils continued to operate farming systems much more akin to their Early Saxon predecessors.[562]

Settlement Nucleation Reconsidered

The notion of settlement nucleation has proved pervasive within academic tradition, although the chronology of this process, and indeed its existence at all, remains controversial.[563] It is largely accepted that Middle and Late Saxon proto-villages developed through the nucleation of outlying settlement;[564] once established, such settlements expanded *in situ* into the villages of the High Middle Ages. The influences driving this change in settlement form and location have been widely debated, with demographic pressure, the laying out of open fields, the emergence of lordship and the contraction of pasture each suggested to have underpinned the development of nucleated settlement.

It may, perhaps, appear unwise to employ evidence from an area in which tightly nucleated settlement forms are rare to comment on the emergence of villages in an apparently distinct landscape. Yet, as noted in Chapter Four, some have suggested that the divergence of the landscapes of East Anglia and the Midlands did not occur until the Late Saxon period at the earliest.[565] The Middle Saxon settlement forms of lowland England were, perhaps, broadly uniform; such uniformity enables evidence from the study area to be employed to understand the development of nucleated settlement.[566]

The nucleation hypothesis is predicated on the instability of settlement in the late seventh and early eighth centuries and indeed, as laid out above, a significant degree of settlement change is apparent in the study area, suggesting that the conditions required for nucleation were

[561] Hamerow makes a similar point in Hamerow, '"FeedSax"', 5.
[562] Culpho, marked by Middle Saxon occupation on the clay interfluves, was held by Ely Abbey and Harold Godwinson in 1066, for example.
[563] Compare, for example, Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*; Williamson et al., *Champion*.
[564] That agglomerations of farmsteads emerged through a process of nucleation is implicit in much of the work in Neil Christie and Paul Stamper, eds, *Medieval Rural Settlement: Britain and Ireland, AD 800 - 1600* (Windgather, 2012).
[565] Williamson et al., *Champion*, 189–93.
[566] Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*, 182–94.

present. Such models are, however, also founded upon the existence of numerous, widely scattered Early and Middle Saxon settlements. Yet, the scale of occupation in the study area suggests that insufficient Middle Saxon settlements were present for nucleation to have occurred. Of the 37 parishes here studied, only 9 (24%) have a single ceramically attested Middle Saxon settlement site, while a single parish (3%) has two, with the vast majority (73%) apparently unoccupied in the Middle Saxon centuries. When scatters of metalwork possibly indicative of settlement are considered, only 12 (32%) parishes display evidence of a single Middle Saxon settlement site, while a further two (5%) show evidence of two areas of occupation. Indeed, even if those Ipswich ware scatters extending from areas of non-arable land use are included as evidence of occupation, only 14 (37%) parishes show evidence of a single settlement, while 8 (21%) have evidence of two or more sites, with 42% of parishes completely lacking evidence of Middle Saxon occupation (Figure 7.11).

Rippon, discussing the absence of Middle Saxon settlement sites in the English Midlands, has suggested that such patterns derive from the limited scale of fieldwalking surveys rather than a genuine lack of pre-nucleation farmsteads.[567] Yet, the extent of Newman's survey, covering the majority of arable land in many parishes, particularly in the central belt of the study area, clearly suggests that Middle Saxon settlement sites were not present in great enough numbers to form the loose agglomerations of farmsteads that proliferated in the Middle Saxon centuries.

It has been remarked above that much Middle Saxon occupation evidence may be masked by currently occupied farmsteads and parish churches; it is arguable therefore, that this lack of outlying settlements may stem from modern patterns of land use, rather than

[567] Stephen Rippon, 'Tom Williamson, Robert Liddiard, Tracey Partida, Champion. The Making and Unmaking of the English Midland Village. Reviewed by Stephen Rippon', *Agricultural History Review* 61 (2013): 353–54.

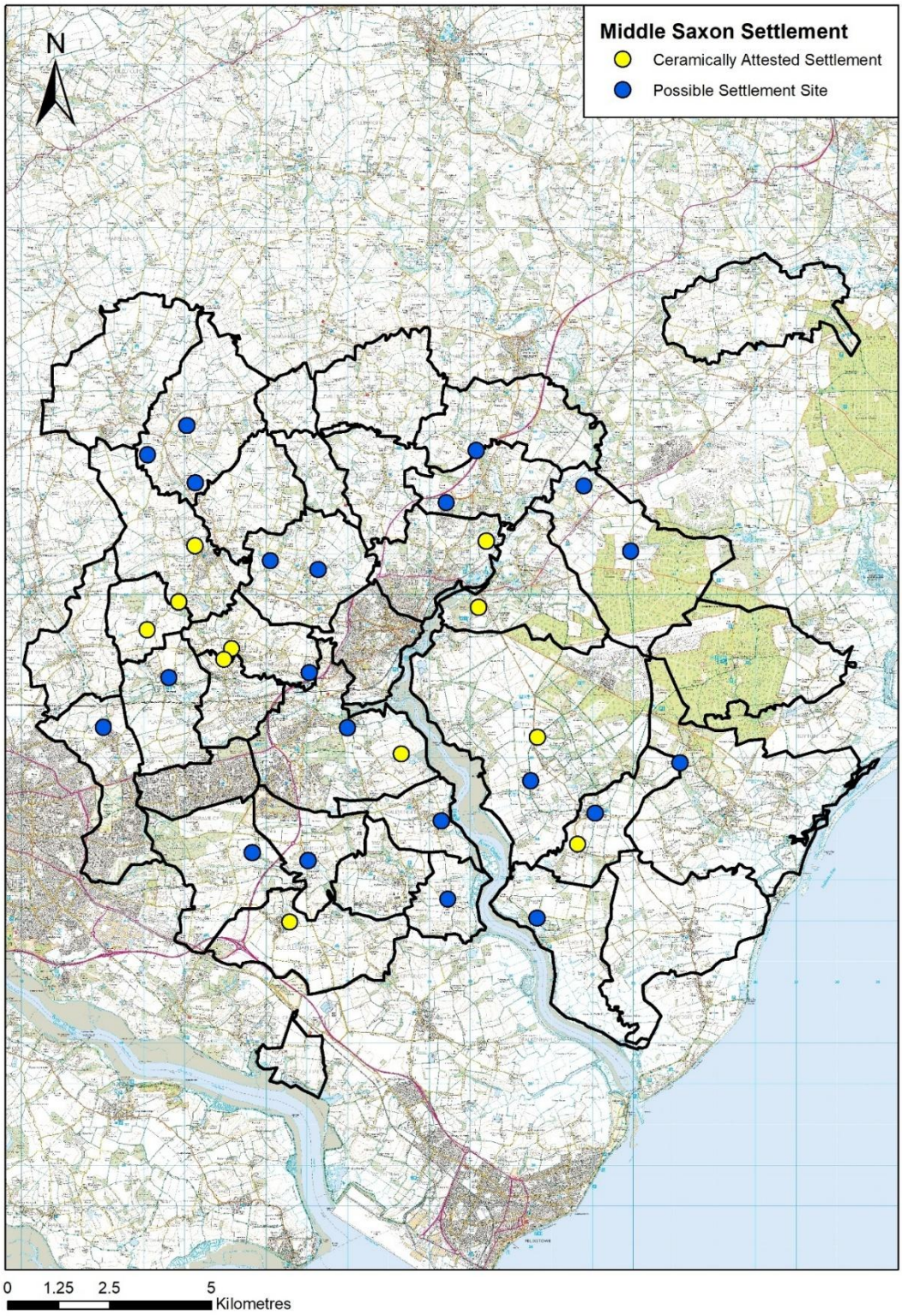

Figure 7.11: the distribution of possible Middle Saxon settlements in the study area. Even when a low threshold for settlement is employed, it is clear that insufficient settlement nuclei were present for nucleation to have occurred. Source: DVSA 1-37.

genuine historic trends. Test pitting within currently occupied settlement cores, particularly in East Anglia, has, however, consistently failed to uncover large numbers of Middle Saxon settlements located beneath currently occupied sites.[568] While the masking of Middle Saxon occupation evidence by later settlement must be acknowledged, it is arguable that the impact of this is limited in the study area, particularly when it is considered that Middle Saxon settlements obscured by later occupation, marked by manuring scatters in the surrounding landscape, have been included in the above discussion.

Indeed, although parishes in which numerous Middle Saxon settlement foci have been identified are often employed as evidence of settlement nucleation, it is arguable that much the opposite is true. Many of those Middle Saxon sites in multi-settlement parishes persisted into the Late Saxon period and beyond, rather than coalescing into single agglomerations of farmsteads. Two occupation sites are apparent in Martlesham, for example, one of which lies adjacent to, and in all likelihood extends beneath, the parish church and Martlesham Hall, while the other is located near an area of Early Saxon settlement on the site of the deserted Domesday vill of Preston. Although Rippon dismisses such sites as 'secondary 'daughter settlements'', in peripheral areas of parishes', each of these represent stable settlement nuclei that persisted into the High Middle Ages.[569] If nucleation had occurred in East Suffolk, then it may be anticipated that these sites would, during the course of the eighth century, have coalesced into a single settlement. That this did not occur clearly implies that the development of settlement in the Middle and Late Saxon period was marked by other processes, perhaps coterminous with territorial reorganisation.[570]

The evidence from East Suffolk suggests, therefore, that settlement underwent a period of stabilisation, as opposed to nucleation.[571] Rather than numerous settlements coalescing into loose agglomerations of farmsteads, it is here suggested that Middle Saxon settlements became fixed in the landscape; once cemented in the countryside, such sites grew *in situ* to form the proto-villages of the ninth and tenth centuries. That Middle Saxon settlement was more stable than in previous centuries is implied by the number of pottery sherds demarcating settlement sites. While Early Saxon settlements are marked by an average of 19 sherds per hectare, Middle

[568] Lewis, 'Exploring Black Holes'; Carenza Lewis, 'A Thousand Years of Change: New Perspectives on Rural Settlement Development from Test Pit Excavations in Eastern England', *Medieval Settlement Research* 35 (2020): 37.
[569] Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*, 188.
[570] Cox, 'Parish Boundaries'.
[571] Similar processes have been posited in Northamptonshire in Williamson et al., *Champion*, 54–59.

Saxon occupation sites are denoted by 36 sherds per hectare, a rise of 89%. While the greater durability of Ipswich ware in the plough soil must be acknowledged, this increase in the number of sherds recovered from settlements may also plausibly reflect long-term, stable occupation on these sites.

Such notions are corroborated by the association between Middle Saxon settlement and later occupation sites. Middle Saxon settlements are often associated with areas of later occupation, with 36% of sites lying adjacent to areas of later settlement. Indeed, thirteen scatters of Ipswich ware and spreads of metalwork extend from non-arable land use surrounding parish churches and later manorial sites. Although such a relationship is not ubiquitous, that seventeen such sites are located underneath or adjacent to areas of later occupation implies that settlement remained stable and expanded *in situ* after the eighth century.

The chronology of settlement stabilisation has long been unclear, again owing to the reliance upon poorly dated pottery scatters to understand this settlement change. While the association between ceramically attested Middle Saxon sites and metalwork is limited, those scatters of material identified adjacent to areas of later settlement, particularly parish churches, manorial sites and deserted Domesday vills may offer insight into the chronology of this settlement change. Many Middle Saxon metalwork scatters associated with areas of later occupation imply an eighth century date for this stabilisation of settlement. The Ramsholt church site, for example, is marked by a scatter of material possibly deriving from the early eighth century, with coinage from the site suggesting that settlement had stabilised in the area by *c*. 750. Similarly, although marked only by a minor spread of metalwork, the Culpho site apparently became fixed in the countryside by the middle of the eighth century at the earliest. Other sites suggest, however, a much earlier date for the stabilisation of settlement. Settlements, such as that surrounding Sutton church and in Eyke, are associated with Early Saxon occupation, suggesting that settlement stabilised here before the end of the seventh century.

There are, however, hints that this stabilisation may have emerged later in the eighth century, extending, perhaps, into the ninth. The small scatter of metalwork radiating into the landscape from the settlement core of Shottisham, for example, dates from the turn of the ninth century at the earliest, while the loose spread of metalwork surrounding Methersgate Hall, Sutton, possibly the site of a deserted Domesday vill, also suggests a ninth century date for the emergence of stable settlement forms.[572] Such evidence has significant implications. The 'long eighth century' has often been posited as key in the development of the English landscape and,

[572] Williamson, *Sutton Hoo*, 75. See PAS SF-650BF8 and SF-18C7FA.

to some extent, such notions find support in the study area. Yet, while the eighth and ninth centuries may have witnessed the peak of this stabilisation, the development of stable settlement forms was not the product of one century but many. Importantly, the apparent peak of this settlement stabilisation is broadly coterminous with the period of settlement dislocation laid out above, suggesting that they may have been the results of similar processes; indeed, the factors underlying the emergence of these stable settlement forms discussed below are somewhat congruent with those posited as underpinning the 'Middle Saxon shift'.

It has been argued that the stabilisation of settlement was associated with the need to pool plough oxen to provide traction for heavier, mouldboard ploughs.[573] With teams of eight oxen required, groups of farmers combined resources to form plough teams; in such circumstances, settlement stabilised in loose agglomerations in order to facilitate the mobilisation of these agricultural resources. Such notions appear particularly pertinent in areas of intractable clay soils that were difficult to cultivate without the use of such equipment; indeed, that the expansion of clayland occupation was coterminous with the development of stable settlement forms may suggest that the adoption of the mouldboard plough encouraged settlement stability.

There are, however, issues with this interpretation. Patterns of long-term settlement stability are evident in the Early Saxon period, a time in which it is near-universally accepted that heavy ploughing technology was unavailable to the vast majority of farmers; such evidence suggests that other factors may have underpinned the development of stable settlement forms. Indeed, that settlement stability appears most prevalent in the Sandlings, landscapes in which the ard remained a viable method of cultivation, similarly implies that other factors influenced the stabilisation of occupation in these landscapes.[574]

McKerracher has suggested that agricultural innovation may have influenced the emergence of stable settlement forms. The ards of Early Saxon England did little to turn over the soil and prevent weed growth; in time, land became choked with weeds and could no longer be cropped. To counter such issues, in McKerracher's opinion, settlement remained mobile in periods characterised by limited ploughing technology, drifting away from these uncultivatable lands to areas in which weed growth was less problematic. The mouldboard plough did, however, sufficiently turn over the soil to stifle the establishment of arable weeds, preventing land from

[573] Williamson, 'Agriculture, Lords and Landscape', 223.
[574] Fowler, *Farming in the First Millennium*, 182–204. Williamson has suggested that, in areas of light soil, the lack of widely available water and the need to manage communal flocks may have influenced the development of stable settlement. See Williamson, *Shaping*, 129–40.

becoming unusable, enabling settlement to stabilise in the landscape.[575] There are again, however, issues with this interpretation. It appears implausible that sufficient technology was available to bring previously uncultivated ground under the plough, yet these cultivation techniques could not be brought to bear on developing arable weeds. Indeed, it has been demonstrated in Chapter Six that the extent of Early Saxon settlement mobility has been overstated; such evidence suggests that the technology required to repeatedly cultivate infields was available to early farmers.

Subregional variations in the extent of this stability, namely the prevalence of stable settlements in the Sandlings, may, however, offer insight into the factors underpinning the development of stable settlement forms, plausibly associated with the formation and fossilisation of territorial units. Although the parishes of the High Middle Ages are often suggested to have Late Saxon roots,[576] local lordship, and arguably therefore, the greater delineation of territorial units, developed in the Middle Saxon period (see below). Indeed, the Middle Saxon period witnessed an increase in the granting of charters including boundary clauses defining territorial limits, suggesting a greater consciousness of territoriality.[577] Although these early charters describe areas larger than Late Saxon parishes, it is arguable that this increasing division of resources may account for the development of stable settlement forms in some areas, particularly in the Sandlings. Within Sandlings parishes, a limited number of viable locations for settlement are apparent, owing to restricted water supplies. With the boundaries of territorial units fossilised in the landscape, the number of locally available environmental contexts viable for settlement declined; in such circumstances, settlement may have developed *in situ*, rather than drifting throughout the countryside. In the claylands, meanwhile, although these territorial units similarly came into existence, the widely available water supplies and wider suite of environmental contexts amenable for occupation enabled a much greater degree of settlement movement *within* individual territories. It may be relevant, in this context, that many of those currently occupied settlements from which Ipswich ware has been recovered are located in areas of limited water supplies, such as West Norfolk and Southwest Suffolk.[578]

[575] McKerracher, *Farming Transformed*, 34–35.
[576] Angus Winchester, *Discovering Parish Boundaries* (Shire Publications, 1990), 11–13.
[577] Susan Kelly, 'Anglo-Saxon Lay Society and the Written Word', in *The Uses of Literacy in Early Mediaeval Europe*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge University Press, 1990).
[578] Lewis, 'Exploring Black Holes', 37.

Metalwork and Middle Saxon Manorialism

As noted in Chapter Four, it has been suggested that the manors of High Medieval England developed 'from above', with lords planted into local society as larger territories fragmented in the Middle and Late Saxon periods.[579] Others, however, have suggested that lordship emerged through an organic process of social differentiation, with prosperous peasant farmers becoming increasingly wealthy. [580]

The methodology here employed suggests that the pervasive social differentiation within local society that underpins manorialism, although not necessarily manors themselves, emerged in the Middle Saxon period. While social stratification is evident in the seventh century, this was manifested at only a limited number of sites such as Rendlesham and Hoxne;[581] it is not until the Middle Saxon period that evidence of social differentiation is widely evident in the countryside.

It has been suggested in Chapter Two that both the quantity, as well as the quality, of metalwork assemblages delineates social differentiation in the Middle Saxon period. Large scatters of metalwork, particularly spreads of coinage, jewellery and weapon fittings are associated with the contemporary elite, although these were, on the whole, of lower quality and include less precious metal than in the Early Saxon period, with gold objects becoming restricted to the top rungs of society in the late sixth and seventh centuries.[582] Limited numbers of utilitarian items, on the other hand, more usually reflect the activities of the lower classes.

In clayland parishes such as Great Bealings and Grundisburgh, settlements are scattered throughout the countryside (Figures 7.13 and 7.14). Yet, despite metal detecting having taken place in the area, no metalwork artefacts have been recovered from many of these sites, suggesting that such settlements were small farmsteads of relatively equal status, occupied, in all probability, by peasant proprietors.

While the claylands was a landscape of peasant settlements, many sites in the Sandlings are marked by large spreads of metalwork. Indeed, each of those scatters of more than three artefacts are located in the Sandlings, while 93% of all Middle Saxon metalwork in the study area

[579] Jones, 'Multiple Estates'. See also Anthony Brown and Glenn Foard, 'The Saxon Landscape: A Regional Perspective', in *The Archeology of Landscape*, ed. Paul Everson and Tom Williamson (Manchester University Press, 1998).
[580] Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 107–24; Blair, *Building Anglo-Saxon England*, 354–80.
[581] Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*.
[582] Hinton, *Gold and Gilt, Pots and Pins*, 75–107.

derives from areas of acid sand (Figures 7.12 and 7.14).[583] Although such evidence suggests the presence of substantial wealth in the Sandlings, this prosperity was not evenly distributed. While sites such as that surrounding Sutton church are marked by a large spread of metalwork, others, such as that in nearby Shottisham, are demarcated by no metal artefacts, despite metal detecting having taken place in the area. Those sites characterised by large spreads of metalwork can plausibly be interpreted as the residences of locally significant landowners, while those settlements marked only by spreads of pottery reflect small farmsteads, perhaps occupied by labourers dependant on or tied to nearby elite sites. In short, the later Roman pattern of increased social polarisation in areas of acid sand recurred in the Middle Saxon centuries. The factors underpinning this pattern will be explored in Chapter Ten.

Such notions have important implications. It has been posited that manorialism was the product of the Late Saxon centuries. Yet, the patterns of social differentiation laid out above suggests that the roots of this process, if not its eventual flowering, may be found in the eighth and ninth centuries. Indeed, that these symbols of elite activity were widely distributed within the Sandlings suggests that this lordship had taken root at a more local scale compared to earlier centuries. It is important to note, however, that it is not here suggested that the developed manors of the High Middle Ages could be found in Middle Saxon East Suffolk; rather, it is here argued that the roots of this process of social differentiation in local society that resulted in these manors lie in this period.

[583] See, for example, elite indicators such as PAS SF-E0A036 and SF-38141E. Only 69% of PAS finds from all periods have been recovered from the Sandlings, suggesting that such patterns go beyond recovery bias.

Figure 7.12: Middle Saxon elite indicator objects recorded with the PAS in the Sandlings. **1.**– SF-05E1F4 penny of Offa. **2.** – SF-EDA036 silver pin. **3.** SF-466067 gilded sword pommel. **4.** SF272 hooked tag inlaid with silver wire. Images not to scale.

Figure 7.13: Middle Saxon objects associated with lower status occupation recorded with the PAS in the study area. **1.** SF-82F5D7 copper alloy pin. **2.** SF-650BF8 copper alloy strap end. **3.** SF-E2C237 copper alloy ansate brooch. Images not to scale.

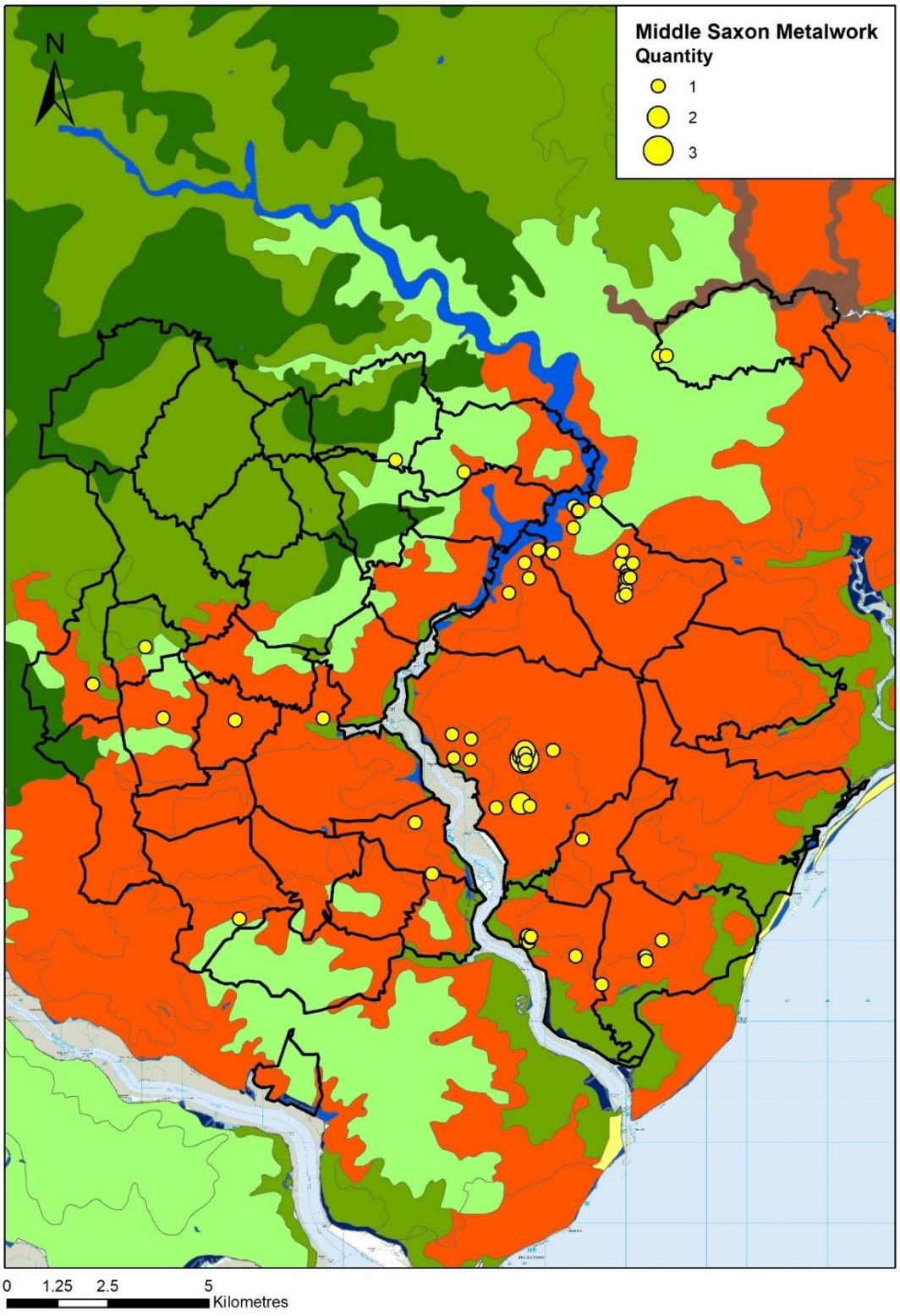

Figure 7.14: the distribution of Middle Saxon metalwork in the study area and its association with the dominant soils of the region. Large metalwork scatters have exclusively been recovered from the Sandlings, suggesting a greater polarisation of wealth within Sandlings society compared to the claylands. Source: PAS.

Middle Saxon Arable Farming

Although livestock farming remained a key element of the rural economy, the widely identified increase in cereal production is apparent in the study area.[584] The cultivated area reached a greater extent in the Middle Saxon countryside than at any time since the later Roman period, with at least 450 hectares under the plough, although it is inevitable that a larger area than this was cropped but was manured through methods that leave no trace in the ploughzone (Figure 7.15). The extent of Middle Saxon cultivation represents a 117% increase in the area under the plough and perhaps, therefore, agricultural output, compared to the immediate post-Roman centuries, although it must be noted that it is likely that this area was not contemporaneously cultivated. It has been suggested that the scale and success of the post-medieval 'agricultural revolution' can be measured by the coterminous increase in the population; that the Middle Saxon period marked the beginning of demographic growth that continued into the fourteenth century suggests that there was a vast expansion and transformation of arable farming that brought about significant and enduring increases in output.[585]

Arable cultivation was centred on the river valleys in which many settlements could be found (Figure 7.16). Such a pattern is intimately associated with the local environment. It was in these valley-side locations that the most fertile and tractable soils could be found. Indeed, if, the adoption of the mouldboard plough was slower than widely suggested, then it is perhaps inevitable that arable fields remained fixed on the light soils which could be cultivated with the ards available to many farmers. Such patterns may also have been influenced by the distance decay model of manuring, with the effort required to cart manure long distances ensuring that household waste was spread in the fields closest to settlement sites, while more distant fields may have been manured through other means.[586]

This is not to suggest that cultivation was entirely riverine; manuring scatters on the plateaux in the claylands demonstrate that arable agriculture began to expand into the uplands, albeit in a limited manner (Figures 7.17, 7.18 and 7.19). Indeed, it is likely that more cultivation took place on the interfluves than is attested by manuring scatters; as these areas were distant from settlement, it is possible that such sites were manured directly by animals folded in the fields rather than through the use of farmyard manure.

[584] Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*, 295.
[585] Williamson, 'Agriculture, Lords and Landscape', 214.
[586] Jones, 'Signatures', 171–75.

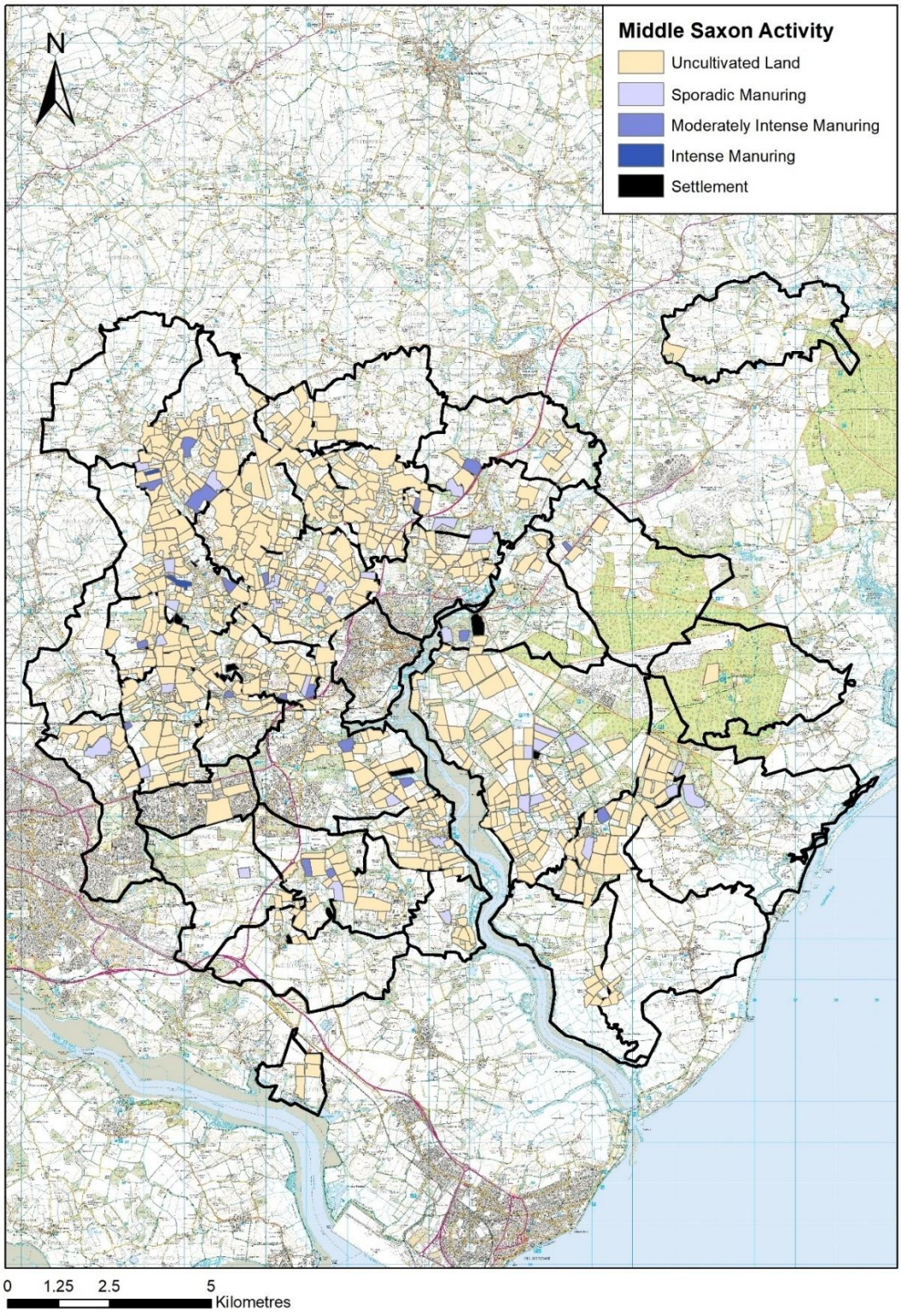

Figure 7.15: the distribution of arable cultivation in the study area as attested by ceramic manuring scatters. It is clear that, although arable farming had indeed expanded in the study area, much unploughed ground remained. It must, however, be acknowledged that these fields may not have been cultivated coterminously. Source: DVSA 1-37.

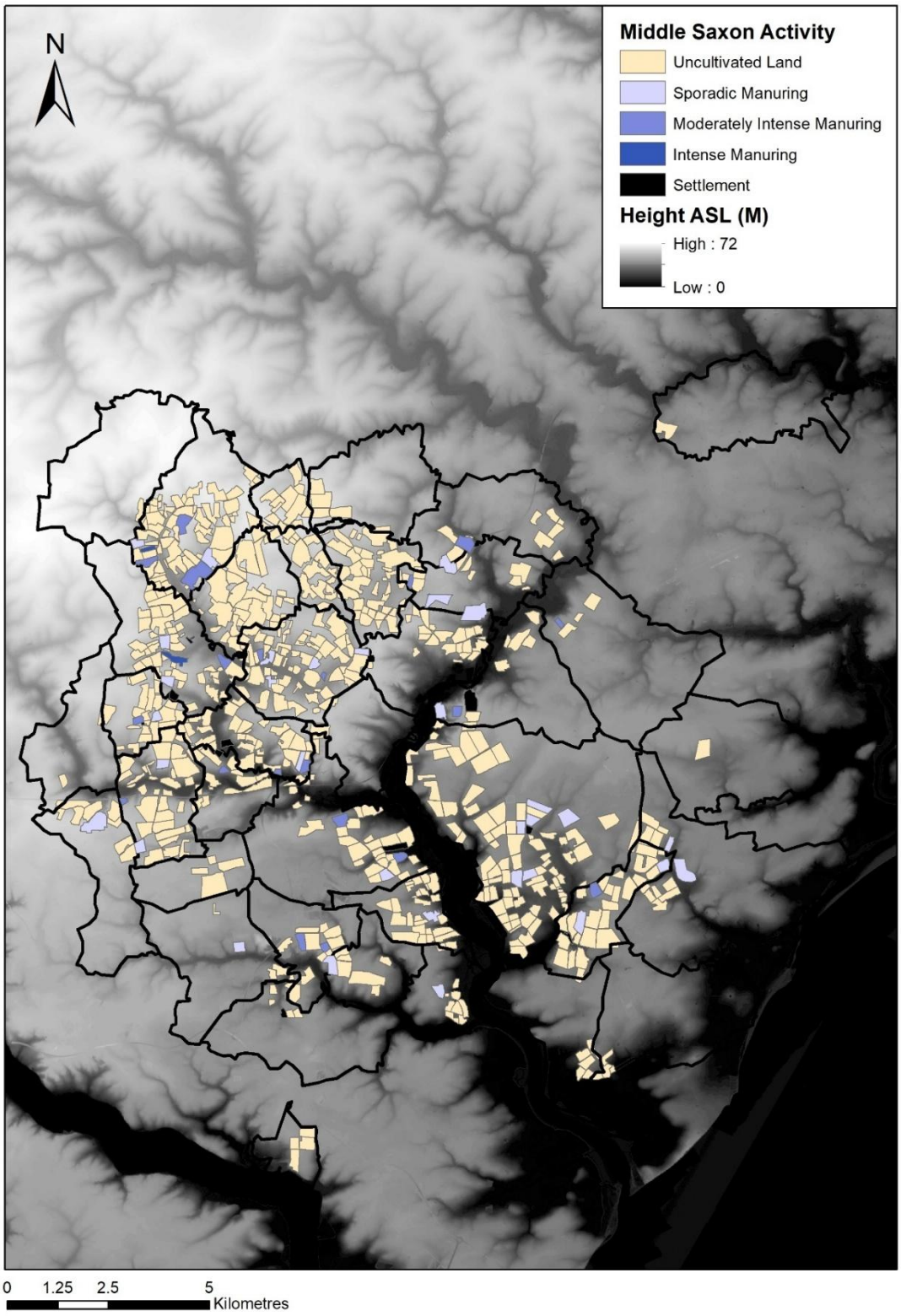

Figure 7.16: the distribution of arable cultivation in the study area as attested by ploughzone manuring scatters and its association with topography. Cultivation of the upland plateau in the claylands is apparent for the first time since the later Roman period. Source: DVSA 1-37.

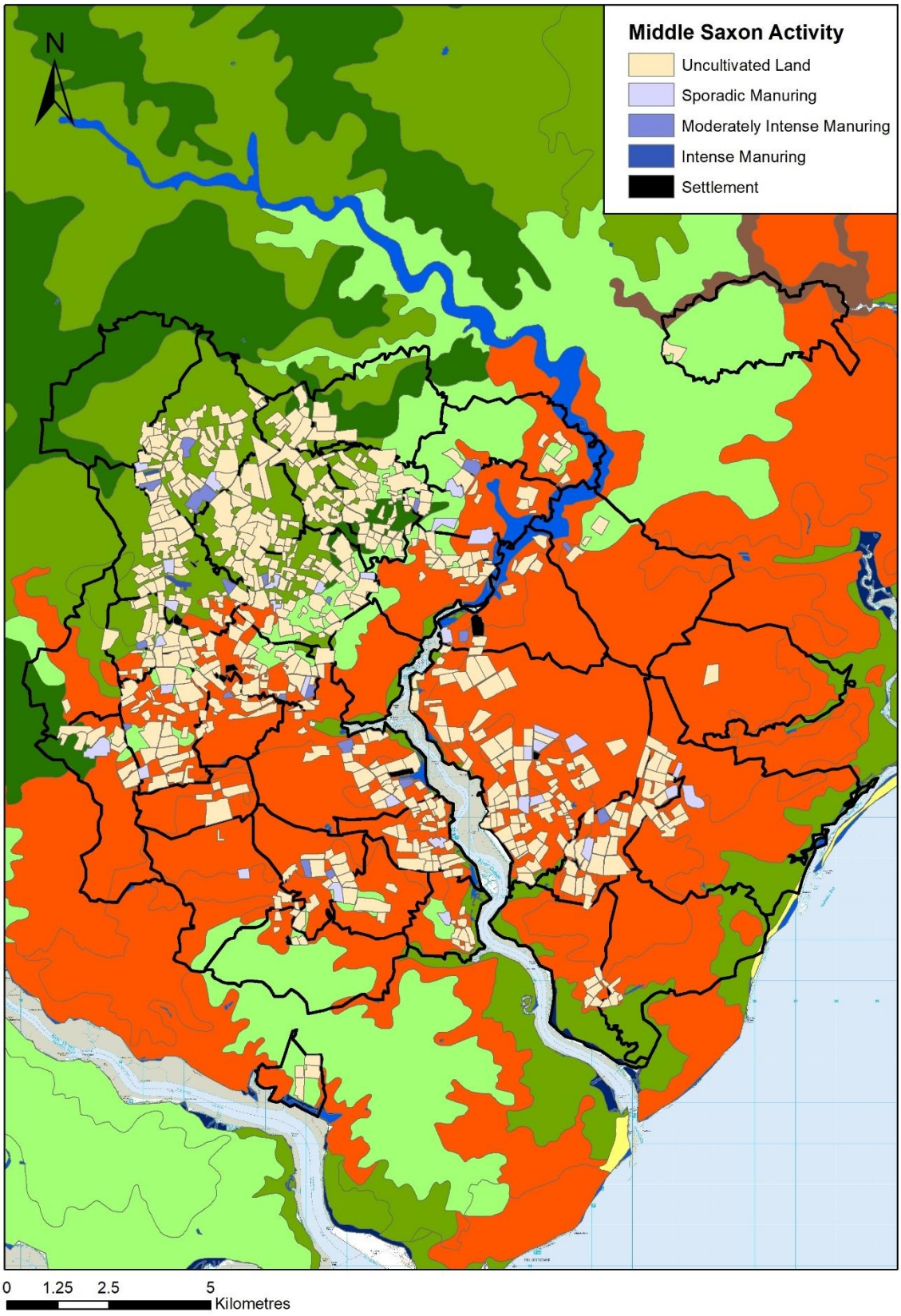

Figure 7.17: the distribution of arable cultivation in the study area as attested by ploughzone manuring scatters and its association with the soils of the region. While the claylands were indeed cultivated to a greater extent than in previous centuries, arable farming continued in the Sandlings. Source: DVSA 1-37.

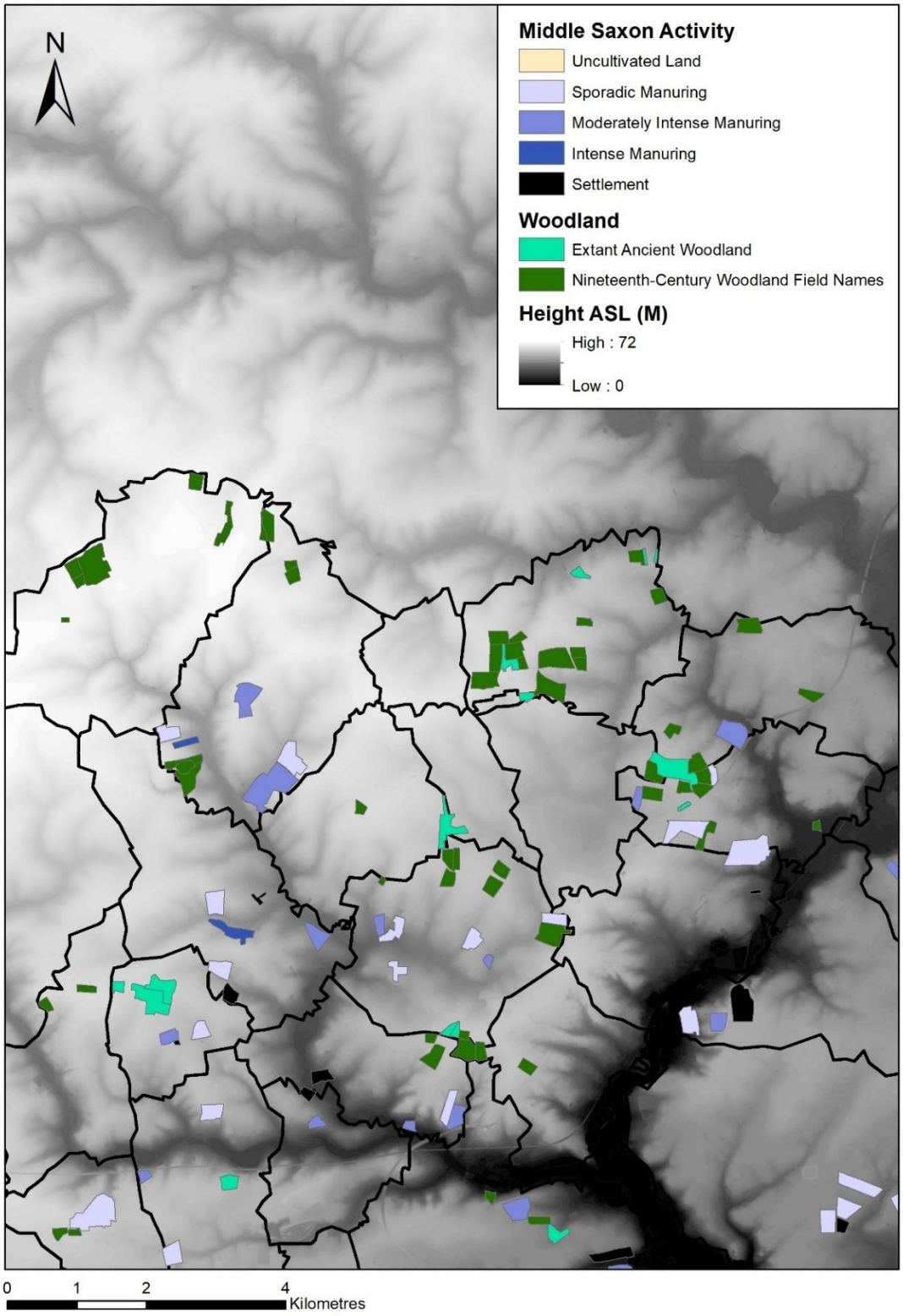

Figure 7.18: the distribution of arable cultivation in the study area as attested by ploughzone manuring scatters in the north of the study area and its association with extant ancient woodland and fieldnames referring to woodland and its clearance on nineteenth-century Tithe Apportionment maps. Cultivation had begun to expand onto the interfluves, albeit in a limited manner. Source: DVSA 1-37.

Figure 7.19: sloping ground on the valley side in Clopton. Areas of free-draining clay such as this were under the plough in the Middle Saxon period.

The chronology of this arable expansion has been much debated. Some have argued that the spread of arable cultivation, particularly in areas of heavy clay, was the product of the later seventh century, a date derived from pollen sequences and increased alluviation in sediment samples.[587] As has been suggested above, however, the dislocation of settlement in the Middle Saxon period, as well as the expansion of clayland occupation, was the product of many centuries; such notions suggest that the chronology of arable expansion may similarly require re-examination. Although the number of metalwork artefacts deriving from areas of arable cultivation is relatively limited, those that are apparent, as at Culpho, suggest that this expansion of cultivation occurred by *c*. AD 750. Indeed, the metalwork scatter adjacent to the settlement core of Shottisham suggests that cultivation expanded into this previously unploughed landscape by the ninth century, although it must be acknowledged that these artefacts simply suggest that cultivation was taking place at this date, rather than providing a secure t*erminus post quem* for arable expansion. It has often been implied that the Middle Saxon period witnessed a sudden explosion in the scale of cultivation at the beginning of the eighth century. Yet, such evidence, albeit slight, suggests the contrary; rather than a period of rapid expansion, arguments can be made for a much slower, more gradual growth of arable farming.

The factors underpinning these agricultural changes have long been debated.[588] At a most basic level, the need to feed the growing population of Middle Saxon England may have encouraged the increasing production of cereal crops. The Middle Saxon period also witnessed two monumental shifts in society: the rebirth of towns and the development of a market economy, based upon a system of economic centres known as 'productive sites'. The development of towns such as Ipswich increased the number of non-agriculturally productive members of society, albeit in a minor way compared to later centuries; such workers, no longer fed by the produce of their own farms, were provisioned by increases in production in the wider countryside. The growth of the urban, industrial population in the post-medieval period precipitated and, to a large degree, compelled the coterminous agricultural revolution; it can surely be suggested that increases in the agriculturally unproductive element of society may have driven similar changes in the 'long eighth century', albeit in a more muted manner. The development of a market economy and local market centres may have further encouraged a shift to arable farming. The management of crops, as opposed to livestock, enables more foodstuffs to be produced from the same areas of the landscape. The growth of this market

[587] McKerracher, *Farming Transformed*, 80–82.
[588] Compare, for example, Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*; Lewis et al., *Village, Hamlet and Field*; Williamson, *Time and Topography*.

economy plausibly encouraged a shift to arable farming systems in which surpluses could be produced to be sold or exchanged for other goods, such as mass-produced Ipswich ware.

The Middle Saxon period also witnessed the proliferation of lordship within local society. These local lords, more closely involved in the management of their estates, may have further encouraged or enforced the shift to arable agricultural systems. This spread of lordship brought about an increase in the extraction of resources from the lower classes; such extraction may have encouraged a shift to an arable cultivation system, through which surpluses could be produced to meet the growing demands of the elite. Furthermore, cereal crops are eminently suited to taxation, due to the ease with which they can be stored, measured and transported.[589] These emerging local elites may plausibly, therefore, have enforced increasing arable cultivation to ease the extraction of wealth and resources from the lower classes.

Middle Saxon Livestock Farming

It is certain that there was an increase in the relative importance of, and therefore, investment in, arable agriculture in the Middle Saxon period. Yet, although some have implied that this brought about the abandonment of livestock husbandry in favour of producing grain crops, the shift to arable farming has arguably been overstated. The Middle Saxon arable area, although more than twice that under the plough in the Early Saxon period, represents just 18% of the later Roman cultivated landscape; indeed, only 9% of the countryside was under the plough in the Middle Saxon centuries, although this includes only those areas manured using household refuse. In essence, while the beginnings of 'cerealisation' belong to the Middle Saxon period, much of the landscape remained uncultivated, given over to livestock husbandry as well as the production of timber and underwood. McKerracher has argued that the development of 'massive ditched systems of droveways, paddocks and stockyards in the vicinity of settlements' in the Middle Saxon period results from a 'tension' that arose due to expanding cultivation that carved up much of the previously grazed land.[590] The prevalence of grazing resources in East Suffolk suggests that no such 'tension' existed. While the importance of cereal crops increased *relative* to livestock husbandry, the scale of and investment in cultivation, in terms of land area at least, did not supplant or surpass the value placed on livestock husbandry.

Scatters of metalwork from the study area attest the continued exploitation of the upland plateaux as grazing for livestock. Although limited in number, small spreads of metalwork have

[589] James Scott, *Against the Grain: A Deep History of the Earliest States* (Yale University Press, 2017), 129–33.
[590] McKerracher, *Farming Transformed*, 120.

been recovered from the interfluves distant from settlement sites. These scatters, comprised of personal possessions such as brooches and pins, represent objects lost while managing herds of livestock and have been recovered from parishes such as Ramsholt, Dallinghoo and Foxhall (Figures 7.20 and 7.21).[591]

These areas of unploughed ground, often carrying woodland, wood pasture and heath, occur away from settlement, perhaps on the boundaries of the agricultural territories of individual or groups of farmsteads. It is, of course, possible that these areas were cultivated and manured in a way that leaves little trace in the archaeological record, such as the ploughing in of stubble and direct manuring by animals. Yet, as in previous periods, it is unlikely that the expansion of cultivation did not leave significant areas of unploughed ground, particularly in more marginal environments when areas of fertile, riverine soils remained uncultivated. Although these areas were avoided by arable cultivation, they were not unutilised wastes, managed as grazing for livestock, as well as for the production of wood and timber. Indeed, the importance of such landscapes, along with riverine meadows, may have increased throughout the Middle Saxon period. Although not as rapid as has been argued elsewhere, the expansion of clayland cultivation suggests that heavy ploughing technology proliferated in the Middle Saxon period, requiring increasing numbers of animals to be kept through the winter to provide traction. As such, the importance of these unploughed landscapes grew, not only as seasonal grazing but also for the production of leafy hay to provide sustenance to cattle and oxen over the winter.

Figure 7.20: SF-38B6E5 Middle Saxon copper alloy pin. Objects such as these scattered across the interfluves attest the exploitation of such landscapes as grazing for livestock. Image not to scale.

[591] See, for example, PAS SF-8E4136, SF-38B6E5 and SF-C8524B.

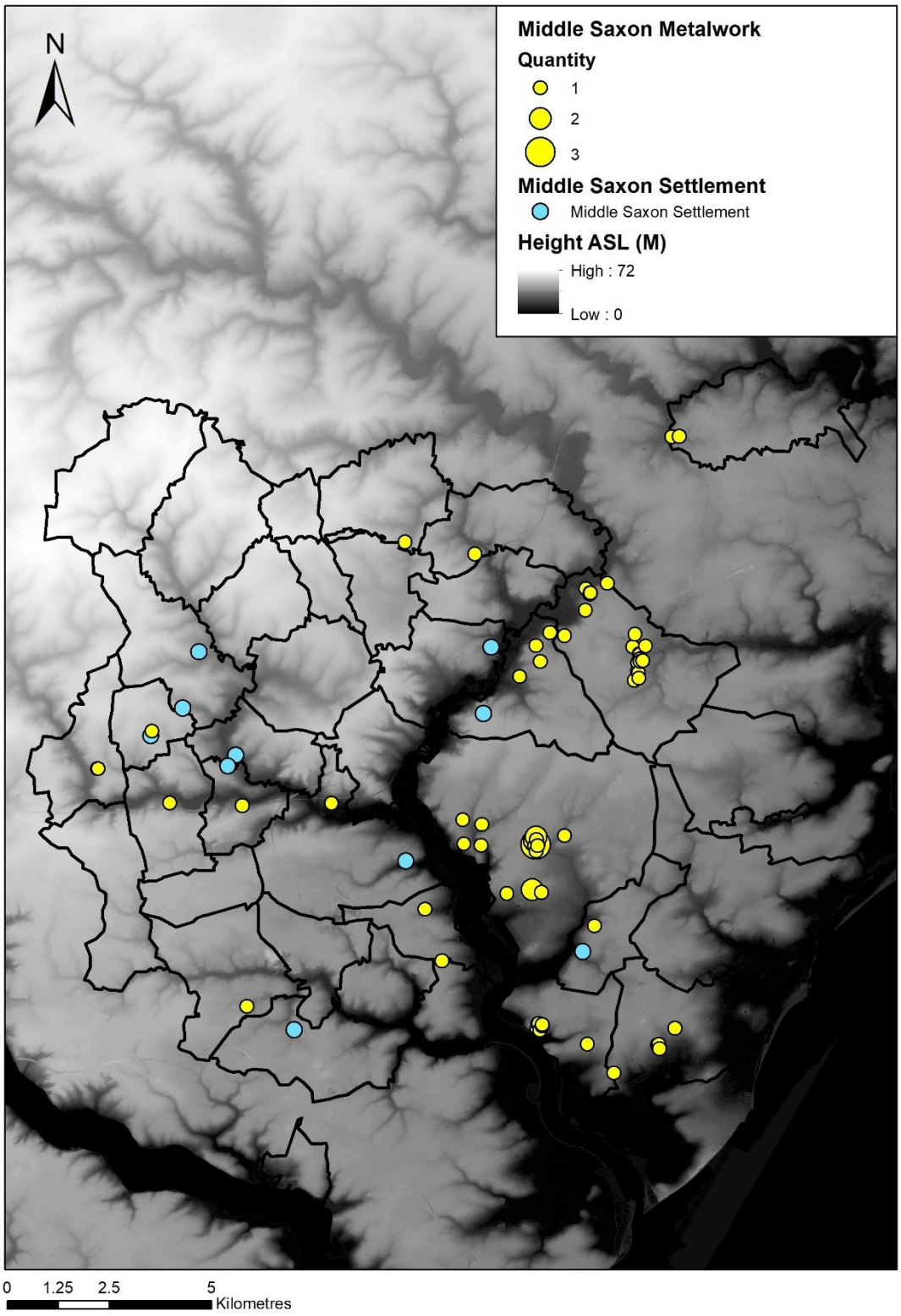

Figure 7.21: the distribution of Middle Saxon settlement and metalwork in the study area. Numerous scatters of metalwork isolated from settlement on the interfluves are apparent, the result of the movement of livestock throughout the countryside. Source: DVSA 1-37 and PAS.

Environmentally structured patterns of livestock farming also continued in line with preceding centuries, manifested in the varying manuring strategies of Middle Saxon East Suffolk. As in the later Roman and Early Saxon periods, the claylands are characterised by a greater level of ceramic manuring than the Sandlings, with each of those intense ploughzone manuring scatters located within the claylands, while 66% of moderately intense manuring scatters are found in areas of clay soil, despite less than a third of settlements being located in High Suffolk.[592] These variations in manuring practices are, again, likely the result of differing systems of livestock management, driven by the natural environment.

The claylands remained a landscape of cattle farming, with animals seasonally grazed on wood pastures as well as riverine meadows after the hay harvest in early summer. Such cattle were, as in previous periods, stalled in yards and barns over winter.[593] The dung of these cattle was stored in heaps surrounding the farmstead where it became intermixed with household refuse; such waste, when spread across the arable landscape, resulted in the many intense manuring scatters evident throughout the countryside. These patterns of livestock management are reflected in place-names, albeit from beyond the confines of the study area. Each of those Suffolk place-names referring to summer pastures, or the routeways leading to them, such as *sumerleswelond* in Great Thurlow and *sumerweye* in Peasenhall, are located in areas of heavy clay (Figure 7.22).[594] Although such names are recorded in High Medieval sources, they refer, in all likelihood, to earlier practices of cattle husbandry, with cattle pastured away from settlements during the summer.[595]

Significantly, the first hints of these practices are also recorded in documents in this period. *Bege sceadwisan gerefan* offers a glimpse into contemporary livestock husbandry and manuring systems. Possibly written as early as the tenth century, but, in all likelihood, recording earlier, widespread practices, *Gerefa,* as it has come to be known, highlights that the seasonal

[592] That the majority of ploughzone manuring scatters are located in the claylands, despite only 27% of settlements lying in areas of heavy clay, suggests that such patterns are real rather than the result of recovery bias.

[593] A number of the buildings from Higham Ferrers can plausibly be interpreted as stables or cattle sheds. Building 2665, for example, is a large sub-divided rectangular building from which no domestic evidence has been recovered, while building 7023 was again a large, sub-divided structure with a central gulley, possibly to aid the drainage of cattle urine. Although other interpretations are possible, the suggestion that such structures represent barns and stables must be seriously considered. See Alan Hardy and Bethan Mair Charles, *Death and Taxes: The Archaeology of a Middle Saxon Estate Centre at Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire* (Oxford Archaeology, 2007), 40–47.

[594] Harold Fox, 'The People of the Wolds in English Settlement History', in *The Rural Settlements of Medieval England: Studies Dedicated to Maurice Beresford and John Hurst*, ed. Michael Aston et al. (Blackwell, 1989), 86.

[595] Keith Briggs, *The Place-Names of Suffolk* (English Place-Name Society, Forthcoming).

movement of cattle, along with the stalling of beasts in yards, was an established practice.[596] In Autumn, the reeve should, it is suggested, 'prepare the cattle-shed' for the cattle to be put 'in stalls' during the winter months. While stalled in these barns, the waste of these animals was assiduously collected, stored in the 'manure pile' from which the author suggests 'dung' should be taken to the fields in early summer.[597] When stored in heaps surrounding farms and yards, this manure became mixed with household waste, leading to the formation of dense ploughzone manuring scatters.

While the claylands was cattle country, the Sandlings remained a landscape of sheep farming, a countryside of extensive heathland upon which large flocks grazed during the day before being driven to arable closes overnight to manure the fields. Such direct manuring, as in preceding centuries, left little opportunity for pottery and metalwork to become incorporated into this manure, leaving few artefactual traces in the plough soil. The folding of sheep is recorded in *Gerefa,* with the author suggesting that the construction and management of hurdles and sheepfolds was a key task throughout the year for those managing agricultural estates. These animals were grazed on the heaths, even during the winter months, with no references in *Gerefa* to keeping sheep in barns or pens.[598] This is, again, not to suggest that household waste was not employed as manure in the Middle Saxon Sandlings; numerous manuring scatters suggest that this is not the case. The use of this manure was, however, secondary to the direct manuring of the landscape by large flocks of sheep; as such, in the Sandlings, the extent of ceramic manuring is not coterminous with the total area that was cultivated, with a large area manured using strategies that leave little trace in the archaeological record.

The quantities of pottery recovered from the settlements from which these agricultural systems were enacted adds further weight to these assertions. Middle Saxon occupation sites in the Sandlings are denoted by, on average, 14 sherds of pottery, while those in the claylands were characterised by just five.[599] It is unlikely that such discrepancies result from differing ceramic use; Ipswich ware was equally likely to be used in the claylands as in the Sandlings. These variations, instead, likely derive from differing manuring patterns. As the fertilisation of fields with manure from farmsteads and yards was the primary strategy employed in the claylands, it

[596] P. D. A. Harvey, 'Rectitudines Singularum Personarum and Gerefa', *English Historical Review* 108 (1993): 1–22.
[597] Early English Laws Project, accessed 1/04/2025, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/law/rspger
[598] Early English Laws Project, accessed 1/04/2025, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/law/rspger
[599] Such figures are total quantities rather than sherds per hectare.

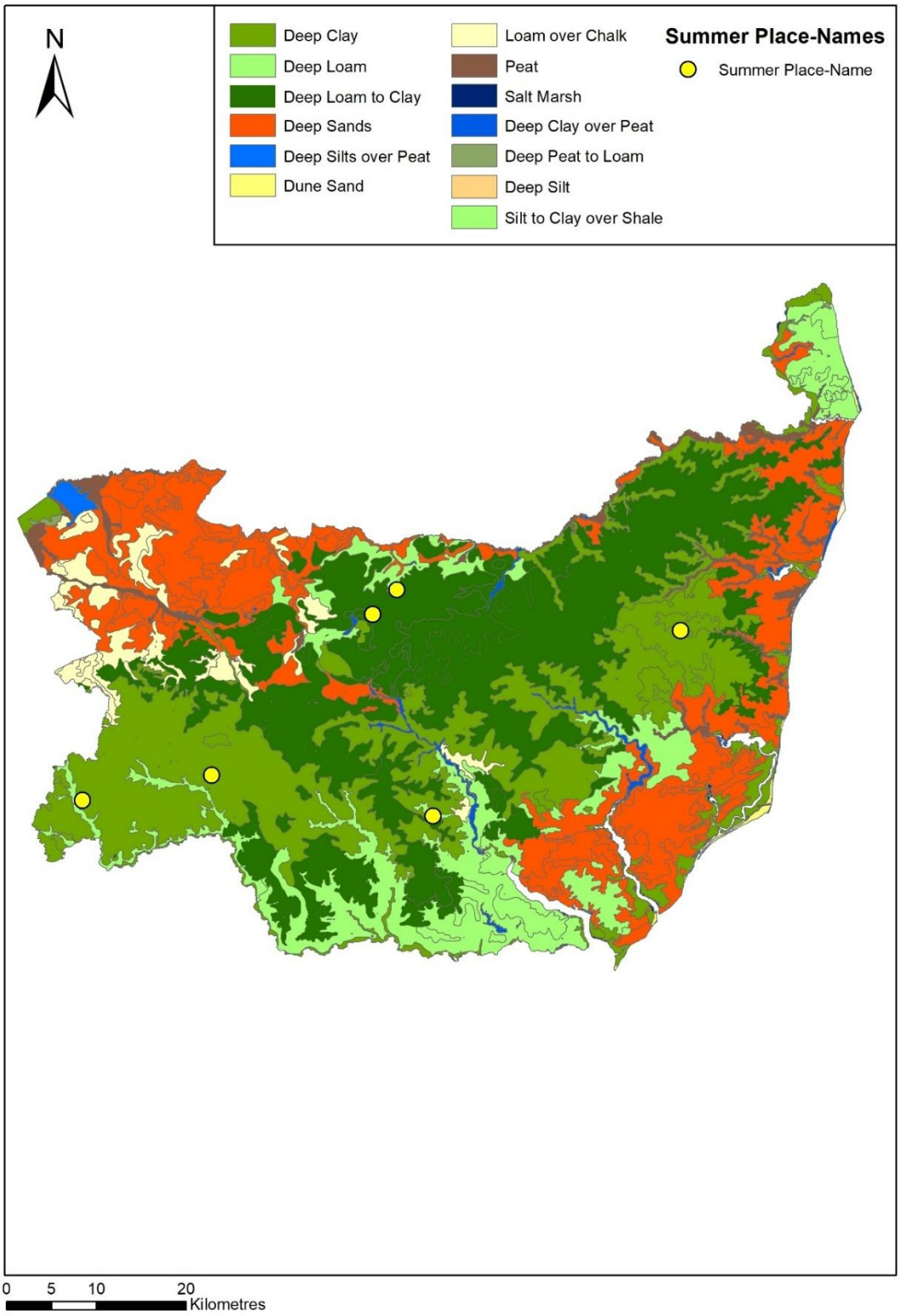

Figure 7.22: the distribution of *summer*- place-names attested before 1350 in Suffolk. Such place-names attest the seasonal movement of livestock throughout the landscape (after Briggs, forthcoming).

is inevitable that ceramic waste was more thoroughly removed from middens and farmyards. In the Sandlings, however, the use of household refuse as manure was secondary to direct manuring by animals; in such areas, the waste from farmsteads was less assiduously removed, leaving greater quantities to be recovered by fieldwalking.

Conclusion

The Middle Saxon period witnessed the beginnings of the emergence of the settlement patterns and agricultural systems that were to characterise the East Suffolk landscape for the next thousand years. A nuanced perception of the Middle Saxon settlement pattern has been presented above, marked by *both* continuity and change, although many farmsteads stabilised in the countryside. Such settlements grew *in situ* into the proto-villages of the Late Saxon period. The recolonisation of the claylands is well entrenched within academic tradition; the extent of this settlement shift has, however, been overstated, with the focus of occupation remaining firmly in the Sandlings. It has widely been suggested that the 'long eighth century' witnessed a dramatic change in settlement location, resulting in little continuity of occupation between Early and Middle Saxon England. The Middle Saxon period was indeed a time of settlement change, although this occurred later than has widely been suggested. The extent of this discontinuity should not, however, be overstated; many settlements were located in areas of antecedent occupation.

It has recently been argued that the Middle Saxon period marked a time of dramatic agricultural change, denoted in the study area by a sizeable expansion of the arable area.[600] These developments may have been influenced by changes in demography, social hierarchies and the economy as well as urbanisation. As in preceding centuries, this agrarian activity largely took place in river valleys, although agricultural expansion onto the plateau reemerged in this period, facilitated by the limited adoption of heavy ploughing technology.

Yet, such notions should not be taken too far; large areas of the landscape remained dedicated to livestock husbandry, the produce of which made its way into the nascent towns and market centres of Middle Saxon England. Environmentally structured variations in patterns of landscape exploitation are again manifested in the differing manuring strategies of Middle Saxon East Suffolk. While sheep farming was widespread in the Sandlings, the management of herds of cattle was central to life in the claylands. Such agricultural practices find expression in documents for the first time in this period. These patterns of livestock husbandry, and the

[600] McKerracher, *Farming Transformed*.

manuring systems they engendered, persisted into the centuries preceding, and indeed beyond, the coming of the Normans.

Chapter Eight: The Late Anglo-Saxon Landscape of East Suffolk, *c.* 850-1100

Late Saxon Settlement Expansion

It has long been acknowledged that the Late Saxon centuries were characterised by significant population growth, with East Anglia densely populated at the time of Domesday.[601] Evidence for such population growth, and the coterminous expansion of settlement is, however, limited in the study area, with only 11 Late Saxon settlements apparent, congruent with the number of Middle Saxon occupation sites, although metalwork evidence implies the presence of perhaps a further 10 settlements (Figures 8.1 and 8.2). Such a pattern seemingly implies that any population growth in the study area resulted in the expansion of existing settlements, rather than the establishment of new sites.

Indeed, such *in situ* expansion is attested in the ploughzone, with Late Saxon settlements marked by denser scatters of pottery than their earlier counterparts. While Middle Saxon settlements were characterised by, on average, 36 sherds of pottery per hectare, Late Saxon occupation sites are denoted by 53 sherds, an increase of 47%.[602] Although it is dangerous to estimate population levels from ploughzone evidence, it has been demonstrated by Jones that there is a correlation between the population of any given site and density of scatters associated with areas of occupation.[603] The growth in the number of sherds recovered from settlement sites may suggest, therefore, that the Late Saxon settlements of East Suffolk were occupied by larger populations than their Middle Saxon counterparts, with further farmsteads added to existing settlement cores to accommodate the expanding population.

Ploughzone archaeology likely underestimates the true extent of occupation, however. The Late Saxon and modern settlement pattern are somewhat congruent, implying that much settlement evidence may be obscured by non-arable land use surrounding currently occupied settlements and parish churches. These sites may only be attested by manuring scatters extending from the non-arable area, as at Thorpe Hall, Hasketon or surrounding the settlement cores of Eyke and Waldringfield, while Late Saxon settlement on shrunken Domesday vills such as Peyton is only attested by a thin scatter of Thetford ware extending into the surrounding landscape. Indeed, in

[601] Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 15.
[602] The shorter period of circulation of Ipswich ware must, however, be noted here.
[603] Jones, 'Signatures', 170–71.

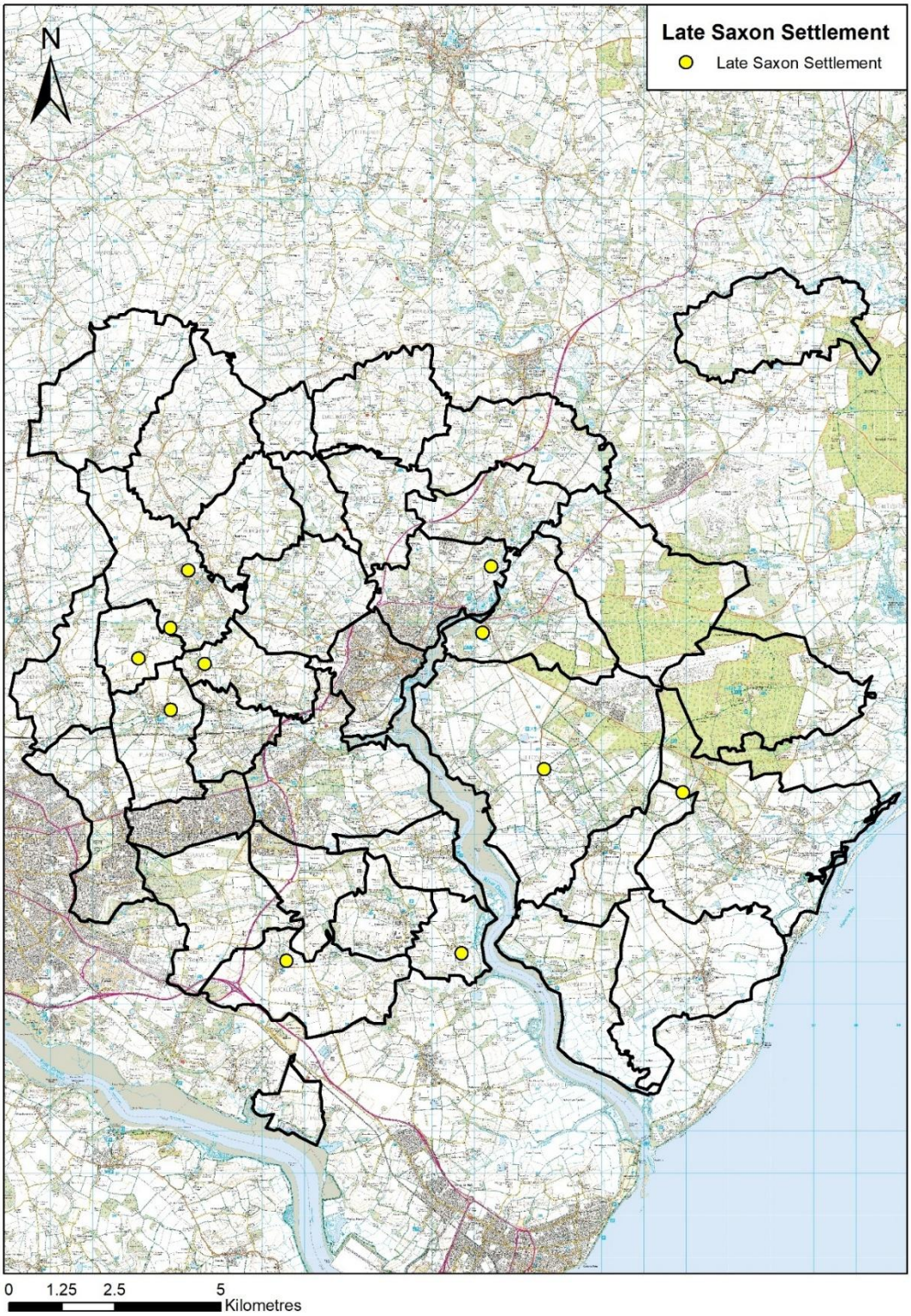

Figure 8.1: the distribution of Late Saxon settlements marked by dense pottery scatters in the study area. Although this represents an increase in the number of settlements compared to the Middle Saxon period, it is likely that this number vastly understates the extent of settlement in the last centuries of the Anglo-Saxon period. Source: DVSA 1-37.

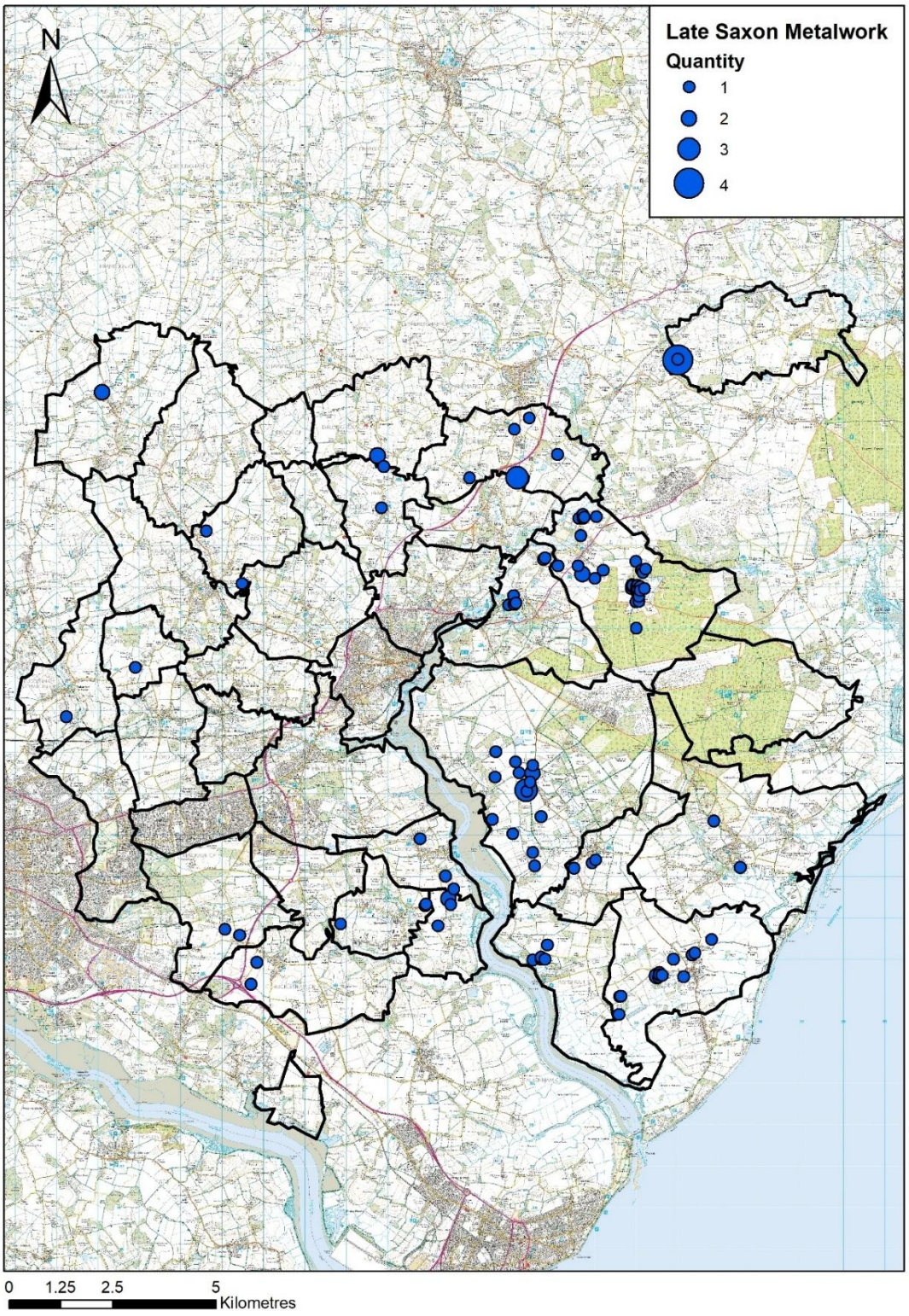

Figure 8.2: the distribution of Late Saxon metalwork in the study area. Dense scatters of metalwork imply the presence of perhaps a further ten settlement sites. Source: PAS.

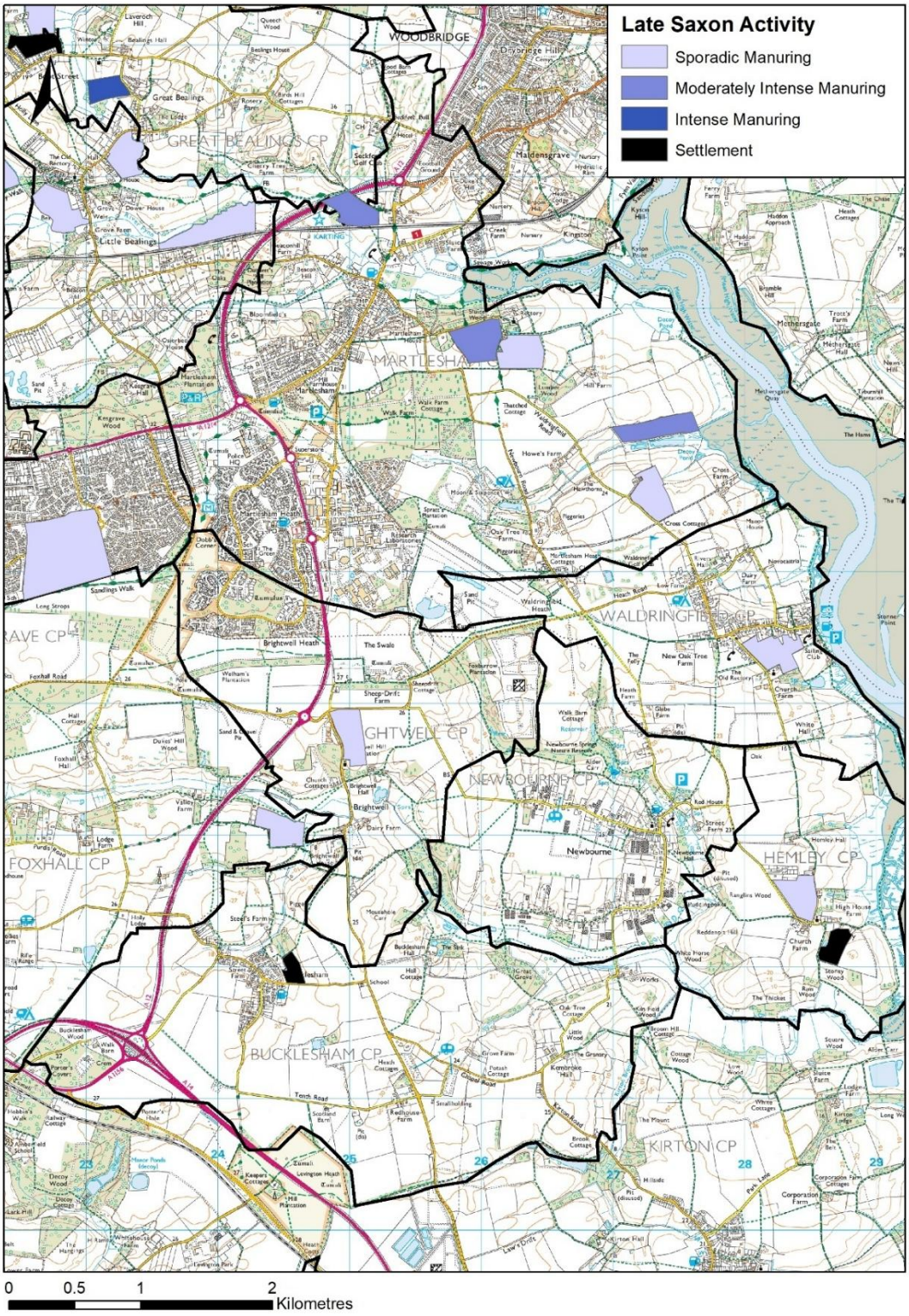

Figure 8.3: the distribution of Late Saxon ceramics in the southwest of the study area. Thin spreads of pottery extending from currently occupied settlements and churchyards such as Brightwell, Martlesham and Waldringfield suggest that much settlement evidence may be obscured by non-arable land use. Source: DVSA 5, 7, 15, 19, 21, 22, 23 25, 36 and 37.

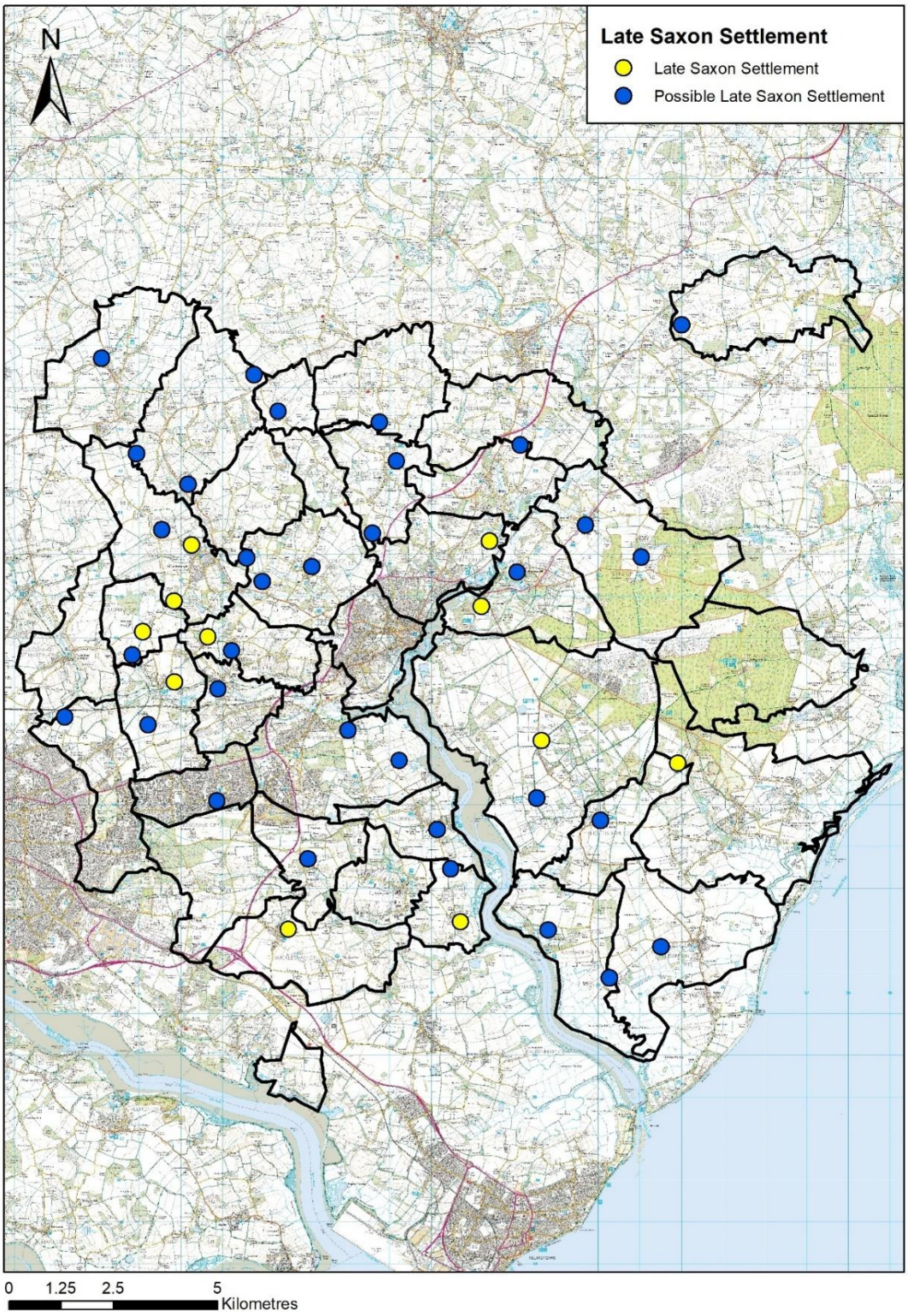

Figure 8.4: the possible distribution of Late Saxon settlement in the study area attested by dense scatters of pottery, spreads of metalwork, as well as manuring scatters extending from currently occupied settlements. Source: DVSA 1-37.

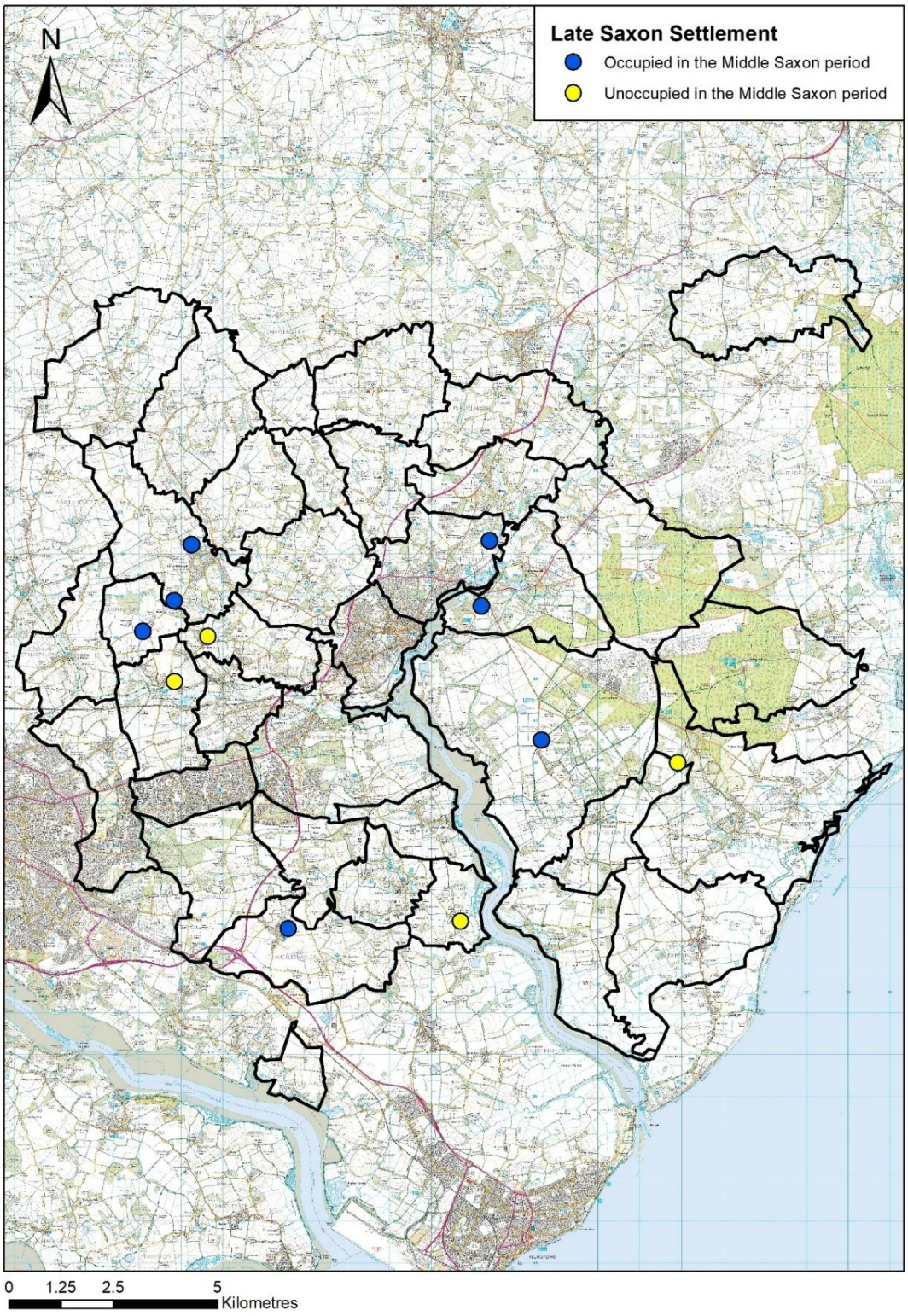

Figure 8.5: the association between Middle and Late Saxon settlement sites. The expansion of settlement in the Late Saxon period did not, on the whole, result in the abandonment of areas of antecedent occupation. Source: DVSA 1-37.

some cases, the entirety of the settlement is obscured by non-arable land use, as at Woodhall in Sutton and Loudham in Pettistree, where no Late Saxon pottery has been recovered, despite Domesday Book attesting contemporary occupation on the site (Figure 8.3). Such examples clearly evidence that the extent of Late Saxon occupation suggested by ploughzone archaeology vastly underestimates the true scale of settlement. If both isolated manuring scatters extending from currently occupied settlements and metalwork scatters are considered as indicative of occupation, then it may be suggested that 45 Late Saxon settlement sites were present in the study area, strung throughout the countryside at a density of 1 settlement per 1.1km^2, representing a 28% increase in the scale of occupation from the Middle Saxon period (Figure 8.4).[604] This expansion did not, on the whole, result in the abandonment of Middle Saxon sites, however, with 91% of antecedent settlements occupied beyond the ninth century (Figure 8.5).

The Landscape Context of Late Saxon Settlement

The Late Saxon settlement pattern was overwhelmingly riverine, with 82% of occupation sites, including each of those major sites marked by large metalwork scatters, located on the floor or slopes of valleys (Figure 8.6). While many of these settlements were situated in the valleys of major rivers, such as in Playford and Melton, minor streams and tributaries also attracted sizeable concentrations of occupation. In Shottisham, for example, the shrunken Domesday vill of *Halgestou* was located at the head of the Black Ditch, while settlement in Bucklesham stretched along a small tributary of the Mill River (Figure 8.7).

The importance of riverine locations, and the access to valley floor grassland they provided, may have grown during the Late Saxon period in response to the proliferation of heavy ploughing technology. Indeed, the location of many Late Saxon settlement sites appears, at a local level, to be structured by the need to access large expanses of valley floor grassland, with each of those riverine sites located adjacent to widenings in the valley floor or at the confluence of rivers and streams, areas in which extensive tracts of riverside meadow could be found (Figure 8.8).

While many settlements were riverine, particularly those in the Sandlings, Late Saxon farmsteads occupied a greater range of environmental contexts in the claylands than at any time since the later Roman period. The expansion of settlement out of river valleys onto the interfluves continued, with two thirds of Late Saxon farmsteads in High Suffolk located on the

[604] This comparison includes both certain and possible settlement sites in both periods.

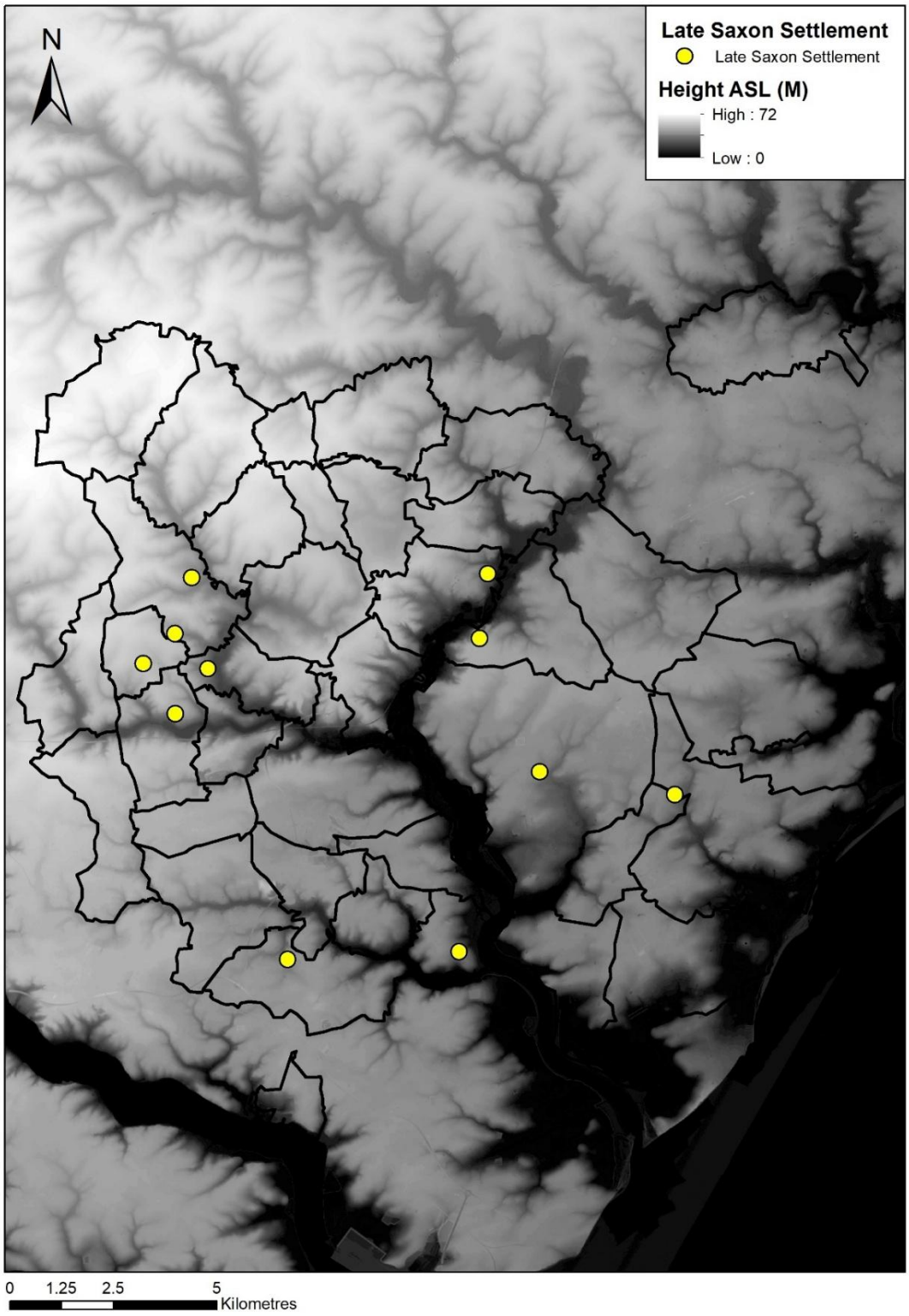

Figure 8.6: the distribution of Late Saxon settlement sites in the study area, attested by dense scatters of pottery. A wider range of environmental contexts were occupied in the Late Saxon period, although settlement remained overwhelmingly riverine. Source: DVSA 1-37.

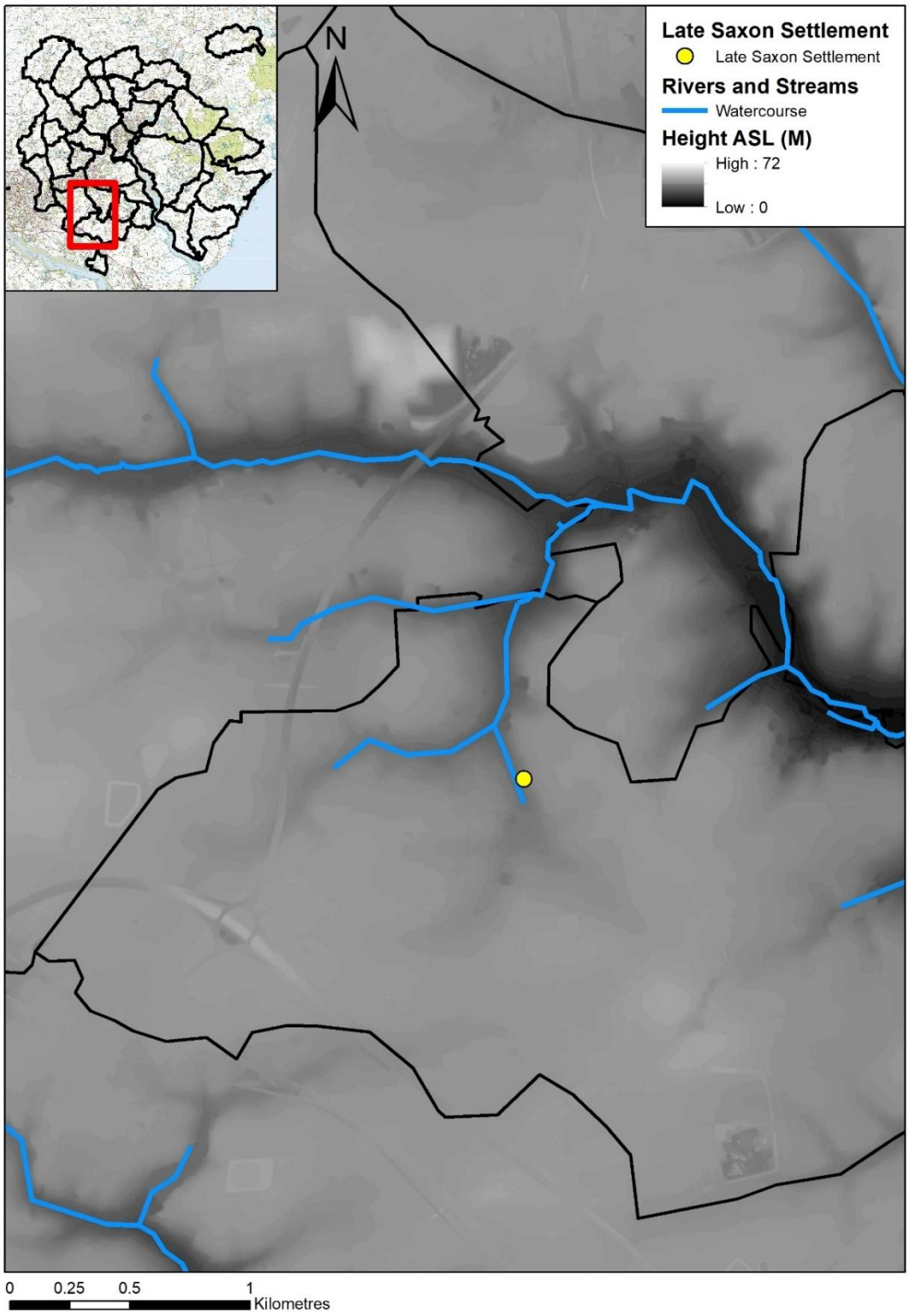

Figure 8.7: the location of Late Saxon settlement in Bucklesham. Minor streams and tributaries, such as the Mill River, attracted significant settlements in the Late Saxon period. Source: DVSA 5, 7, 15 and 25.

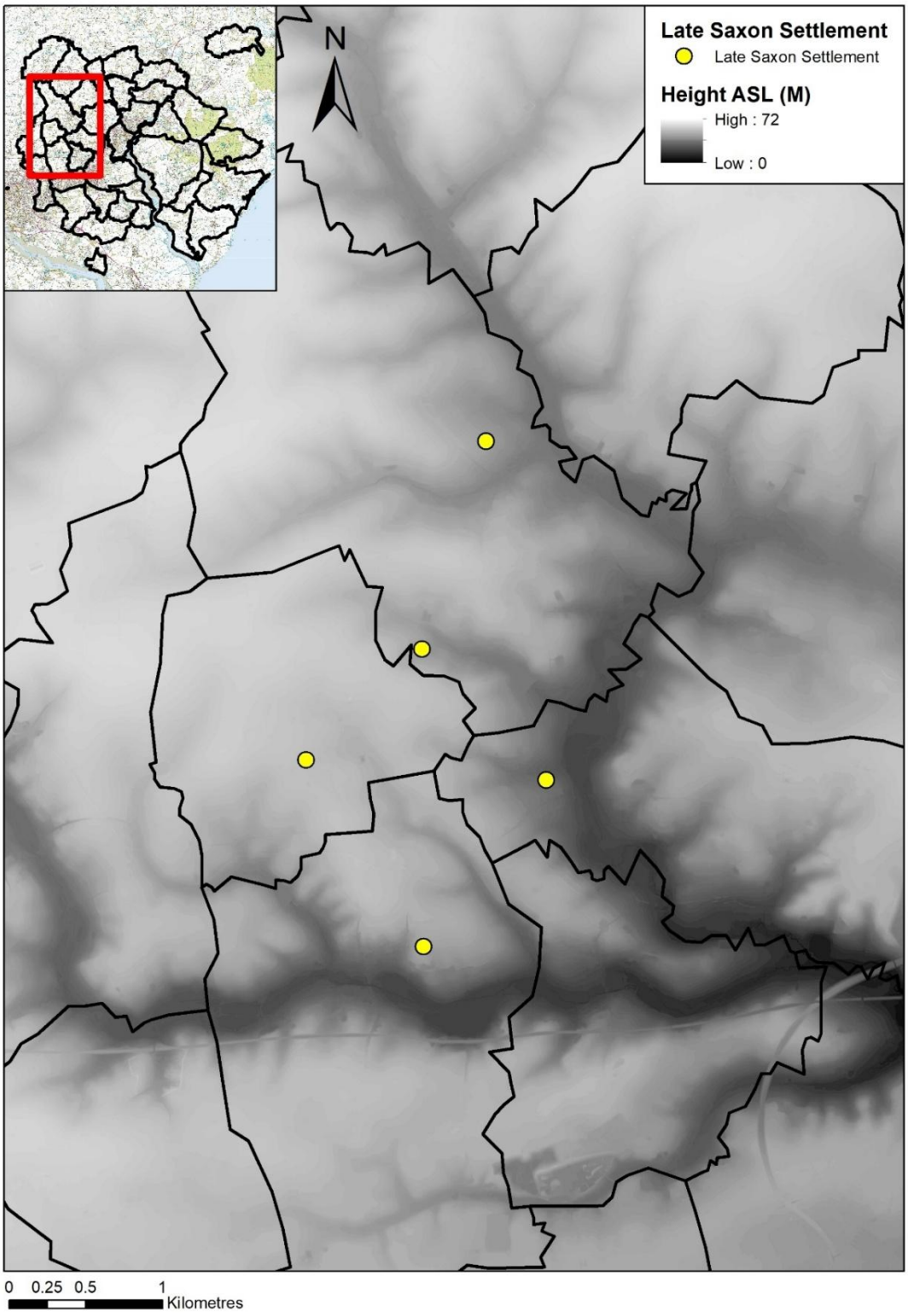

Figure 8.8: the distribution of Late Saxon settlement in the claylands around Culpho. Many of those Late Saxon settlements that remained riverine are situated adjacent to widenings in the valley floor or at the confluence of rivers in order to maximise the area of potential meadowland. Source: DVSA 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11,15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 25, 28, 30, 34 and 37.

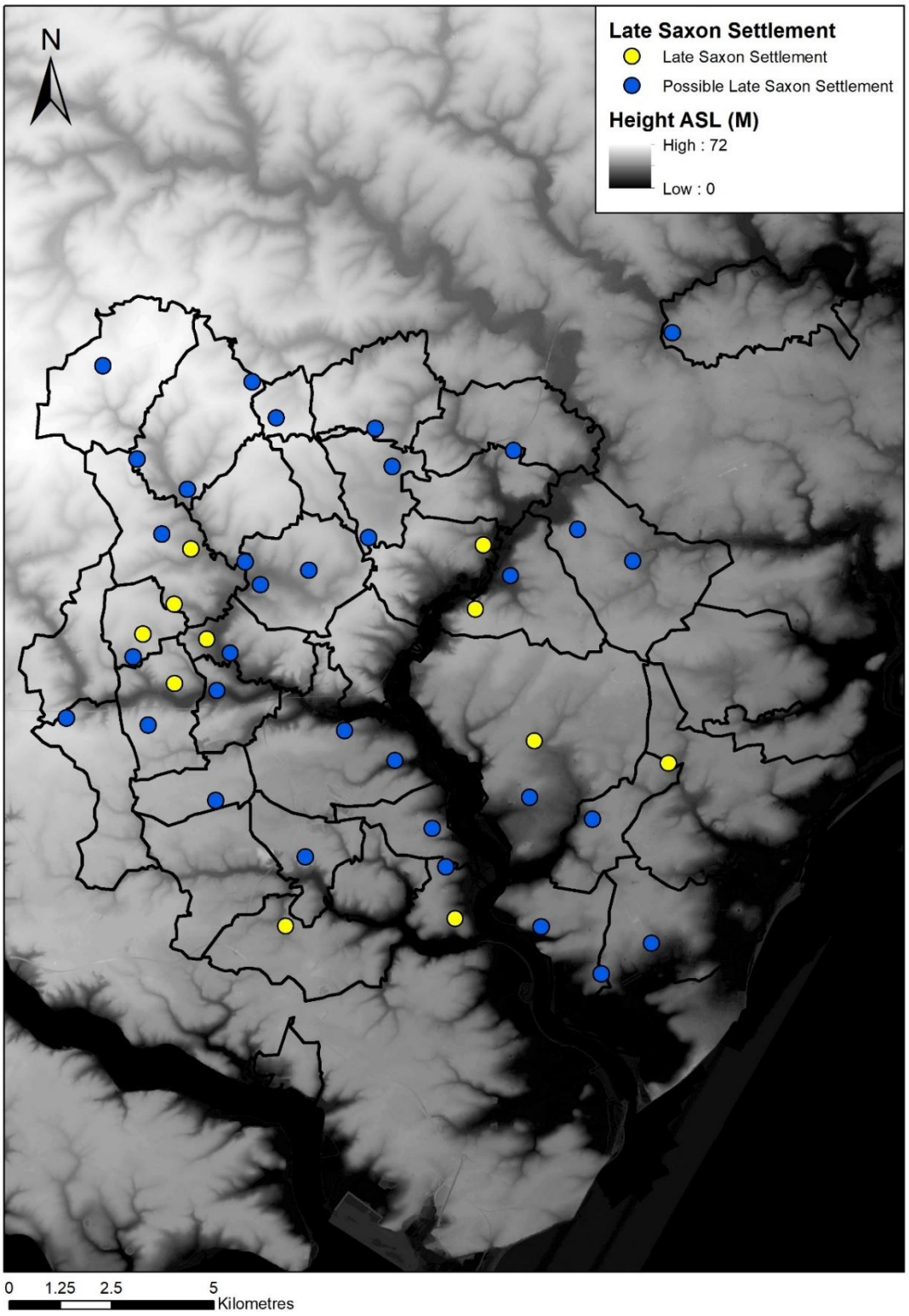

Figure 8.9: the distribution of possible settlements in the study area, including sites marked by spreads of metalwork, as well as diffuse spreads of pottery extending from areas of non-arable land use. Such sites suggest that a wide range of environmental contexts were occupied in the Late Saxon period. Source: DVSA 1-37 and PAS.

Figure 8.10: the area of grassland located on the valley floor adjacent to the river Fynn in Great Bealings, overlooked by a settlement site on the raised ground to the left of the image in the Late Saxon period. The association between such occupation sites and areas of riverine grassland and meadow suggests that the need to exploit such landscapes for fodder and grazing structured the location of many settlement sites at a local level.

upland wolds, while manuring scatters extending from currently occupied settlement cores, such as at Debach, suggest further interfluve occupation in the study area, although much of this occurred in areas in which the plateau was most dissected, again enabling easy access to a wide range of environmental resources (Figure 8.9). [605]

Late Saxon Clayland Recolonisation

While it has been suggested that the recolonisation of the claylands took place in the Middle Saxon period,[606] others have argued for a 'Late Saxon starting date for clayland settlement in East Suffolk'.[607] Although evidence for Middle Saxon clayland activity, both on the interfluves as well as in the river valleys, has been laid out above, the Late Saxon period witnessed a sizeable

[605] Such notions are, however, based upon a small sample of sites.
[606] Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*, 186–89.
[607] Warner, *Clayland Colonization*, 17.

expansion in occupation in High Suffolk. While, as in the Middle Saxon period, only 27% of ceramically attested settlements were located in the claylands, spreads of metalwork, as well as scatters of Thetford ware extending from areas of non-arable land use imply the presence of perhaps a further 10 settlement sites in High Suffolk, reflecting a significant growth in clayland activity.[608] Although the Middle Saxon period witnessed the emergence of occupation in the claylands, as evidenced in Chapter Seven, it is clear that the expansion of settlement and cultivation in High Suffolk occurred over a much longer period (Figure 8.11).

The factors influencing the increasing occupation of High Suffolk appear much the same as in the Middle Saxon period. This increase in clayland settlement was driven by demographic growth, with settlement and cultivation expanding into these fertile landscapes to produce sufficient food to feed the expanding population. The growth of taxation, both from local lords and the developing state, may also have influenced the increasing settlement and cultivation of clay soils to produce a surplus to meet these demands. The greater peasant freedom of the claylands may have further enabled settlement and agricultural expansion in High Suffolk.

As in the Middle Saxon period, the Late Saxon centuries witnessed further urbanisation and the development of the market economy.[609] Such trends may also have encouraged the expansion of cereal production, both to provision the non-agriculturally productive population of urban centres, as well as to sell these crops in order to purchase mass-produced goods such as Thetford ware pottery. This increasing demand for grain crops is attested by the proliferation of grain storage and processing facilities, such as the numerous mills of Domesday Book.[610]

While the occupation and exploitation of the claylands increased during the Late Saxon period, the extent of settlement in High Suffolk has often been overstated;[611] the focus of occupation in East Suffolk remained the Sandlings, with 73% of settlement sites located in areas of acid sand. Indeed, 86% of all Late Saxon metalwork in the study area was recovered from the Sandlings, suggesting a significant degree of occupation and exploitation (Figure 8.12).[612] Far from being a

[608] The intense manuring scatters of the claylands may, however, have exacerbated such patterns.
[609] Nine markets are recorded in Domesday Book in Suffolk. Interestingly, this number is akin to the number of Roman small towns in Suffolk, perhaps implying similarities in the market economies of the periods.
[610] Almost 250 mills are recorded in Suffolk in 1086.
[611] Newman, 'Deben Valley', 483.
[612] Only 69% of finds of all periods were recovered from the Sandlings, suggesting that such patterns are not the result of recovery bias.

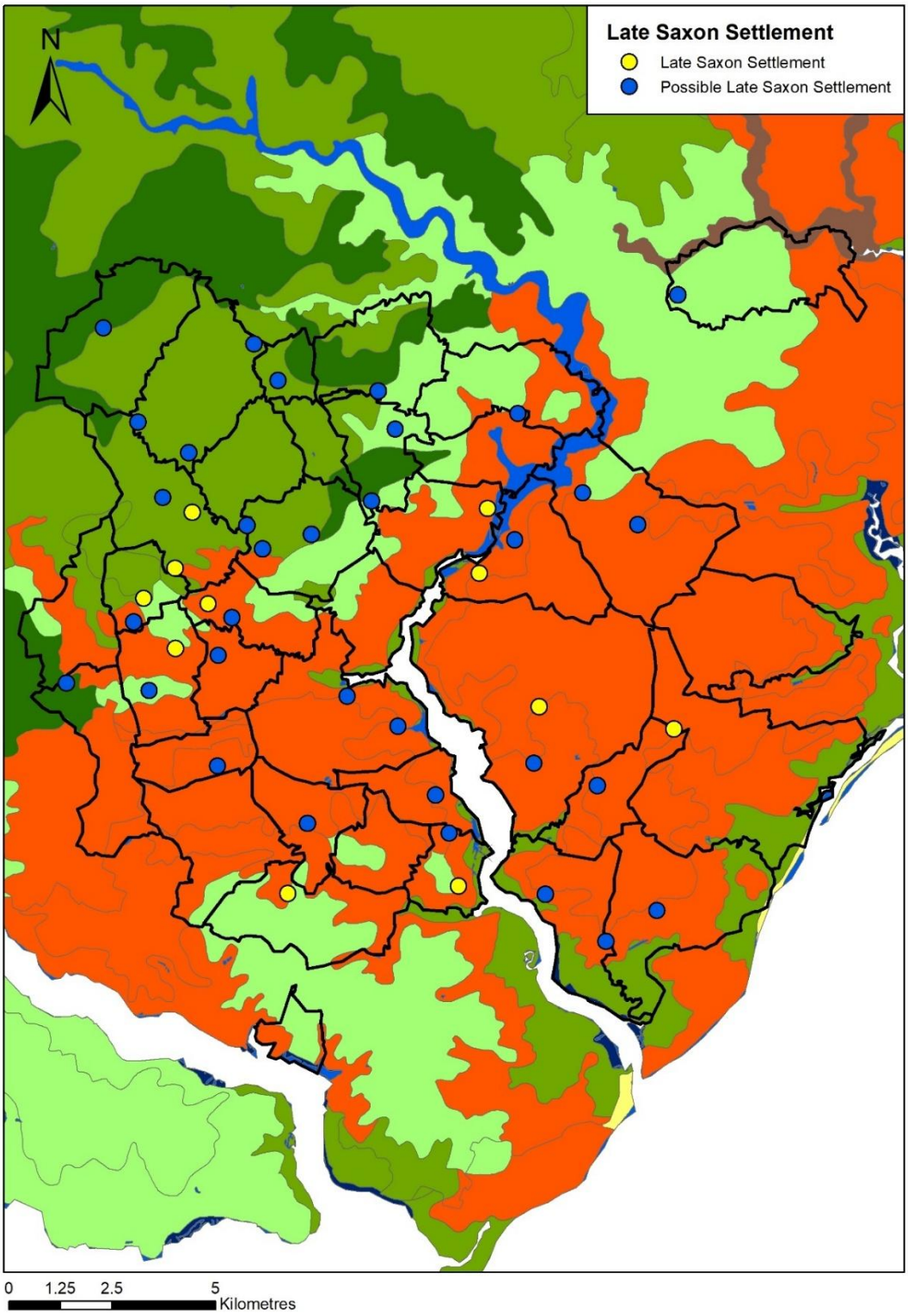

Figure 8.11: the distribution of possible Late Saxon settlements in the study area, including those attested by spreads of metalwork or pottery scatters extending from currently occupied settlement cores. While such evidence suggests a significant expansion of clayland settlement, the Sandlings remained open and exploited. Source: DVSA 1-37 and PAS.

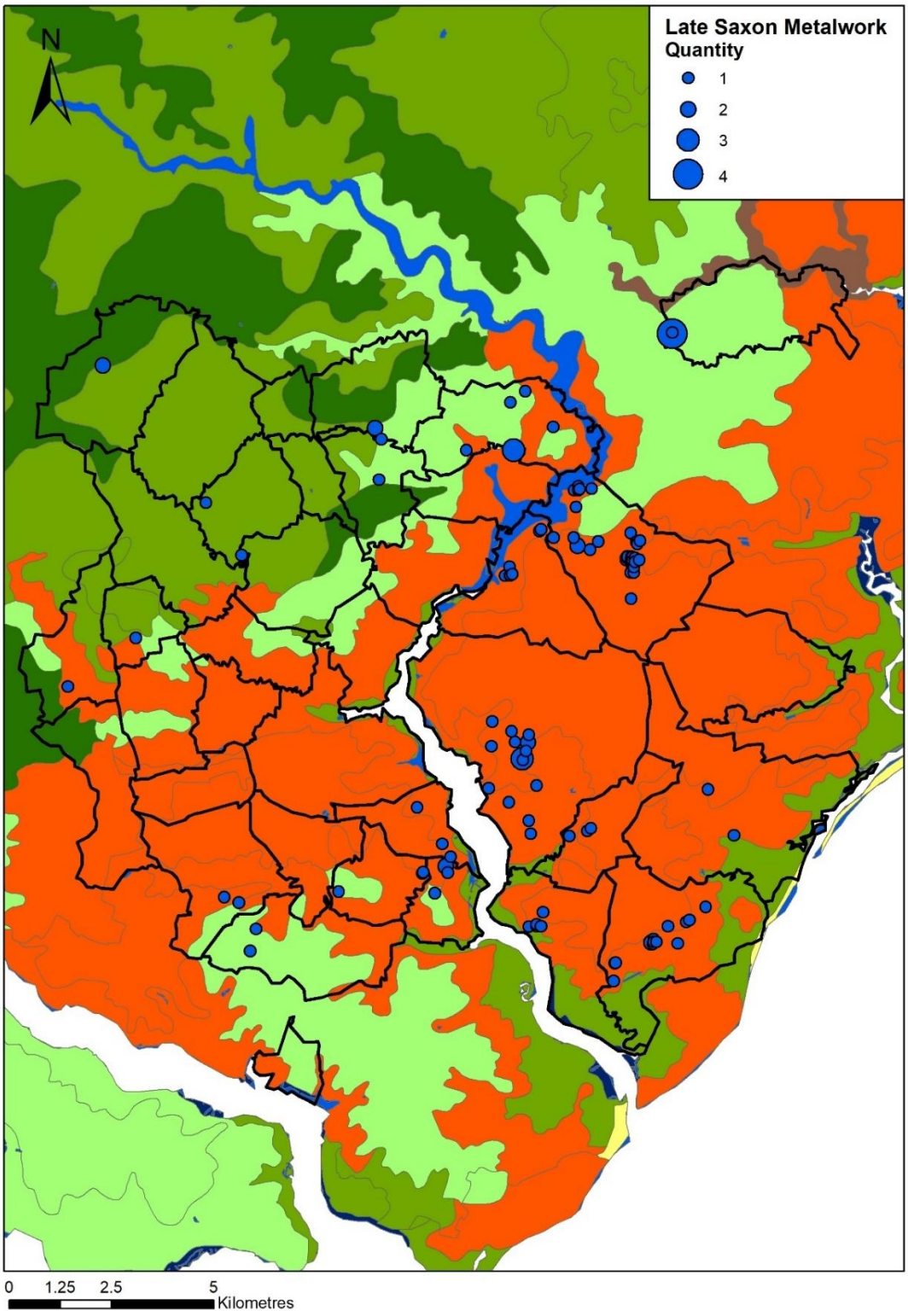

Figure 8.12: the distribution of Late Saxon metalwork in the study area. The vast majority of Late Saxon metalwork was located in the Sandlings, indicative of an occupied and exploited landscape. Source: PAS.

marginal waste, this countryside, and the varied suite of environmental resources it provided, proved attractive to the farmers of Late Saxon England. The Sandlings were cultivated and occupied, with areas of arable production managed alongside flocks of sheep, the prosperity of which is attested by large ploughzone metalwork scatters.

Common Edge Drift

It has been suggested above that the Middle Saxon settlement pattern of East Suffolk was characterised by loose agglomerations of farmsteads thinly spread throughout the countryside. In the Late Saxon centuries, occupation expanded from these sites onto the interfluves, with 56% of clayland settlements located on the upland plateaux, a settlement shift that may plausibly be interpreted as the beginnings of 'common edge drift', although this proliferation of settlement did not, on the whole, result in the abandonment of the former occupation sites. [613] Yet, despite this expansion of upland occupation, a cursory examination of the settlement pattern reveals no association between Late Saxon settlement sites and the commons and greens of the survey area, both extant and 'ghost commons' recorded in eighteenth-and nineteenth-century cartographic sources. Such evidence suggests that the recognisable common edge settlement pattern of the East Anglian claylands, as well as the final form of many of these commons, was not in place by *c*. 1100 (Figures 8.13 and 8.14).

This lack of association does not, however, necessarily imply that these Late Saxon settlements were not themselves located on the edge of common grazing resources; it is plausible that those sites that had shifted to the interfluves were located on the margins of common wastes, albeit wastes that were significantly larger than their later counterparts. These settlements may have been on the common edge in its Late Saxon form, with subsequent encroachment severing the link between these farmsteads and the grazing resources with which they were once associated; in such circumstances, deserted Late Saxon sites can, perhaps, be used as a proxy for the extent of contemporary wood pasture and wastes.[614] Such a pattern clearly implies that the final form of many commons was the result of arable encroachment over many centuries, with much assarting continuing into the post-conquest period. It can, therefore, be suggested that the Late Saxon period did indeed witness the beginning of 'common edge drift', although the margins of these grazing resources were not congruent with their medieval counterparts; it was not until

[613] This figure includes sites masked by later occupation as well as attested by spreads of metalwork.
[614] Similar patterns were evident in Great and Little Fransham, Norfolk, with some Late Saxon farmsteads lying back from the post-medieval common edge. See Rogerson, *Fransham*, 61.

the High Middle Ages that the common edge settlement pattern of East Suffolk found full manifestation.

A clear example of this process may be found in Culpho and surrounding parishes. As will be discussed below, it is arguable that Culpho Wood was substantially larger in the Late Saxon period, as implied by the lack of manured land in the vicinity (Figure 8.16). This waste was ringed by a significant number of Late Saxon farmsteads, huddled around the margins of this area of woodland and wood pasture. The extent of this rough grazing was greatly reduced in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as the expansion of cultivation encroached upon and fragmented this once contiguous area of common grazing. In such circumstances, those Late Saxon farmsteads that were plausibly situated on the margins of the waste became severed from grazing resources, the former settlement often becoming subsumed into arable fields, with occupation drifting to the edge of small commons and greens, the tattered remains of the once extensive woodland and wood pasture.

While a sizeable degree of occupation in the uplands is apparent, settlement in some parishes, such as Great and Little Bealings, remained riverine. This varied extent of Late Saxon occupation on the interfluves implies that, rather than a regionally coherent process, the emergence of common edge settlement was intimately local, intertwined with social, economic and agrarian developments in individual parishes. As the population grew and cultivation expanded, settlements began to shift to the edge of the waste. This demographic growth and agrarian change occurred at varying rates, with the coterminous shift in settlement also a chronologically varied process. While there was a 'shared grammar of landscape',[615] a unified reaction to the fragmentation of grazing resources, namely the occupation of farmsteads around this waste, the circumstances that encouraged these changes were local, occurring in individual periods in each parish. Much like the stabilisation of settlement and the recolonisation of the claylands in the Middle Saxon period, the development of common edge settlement forms was slow and incremental, inherently intertwined with local processes of landscape change.

[615] Williamson, 'Agriculture, Lords and Landscape', 225.

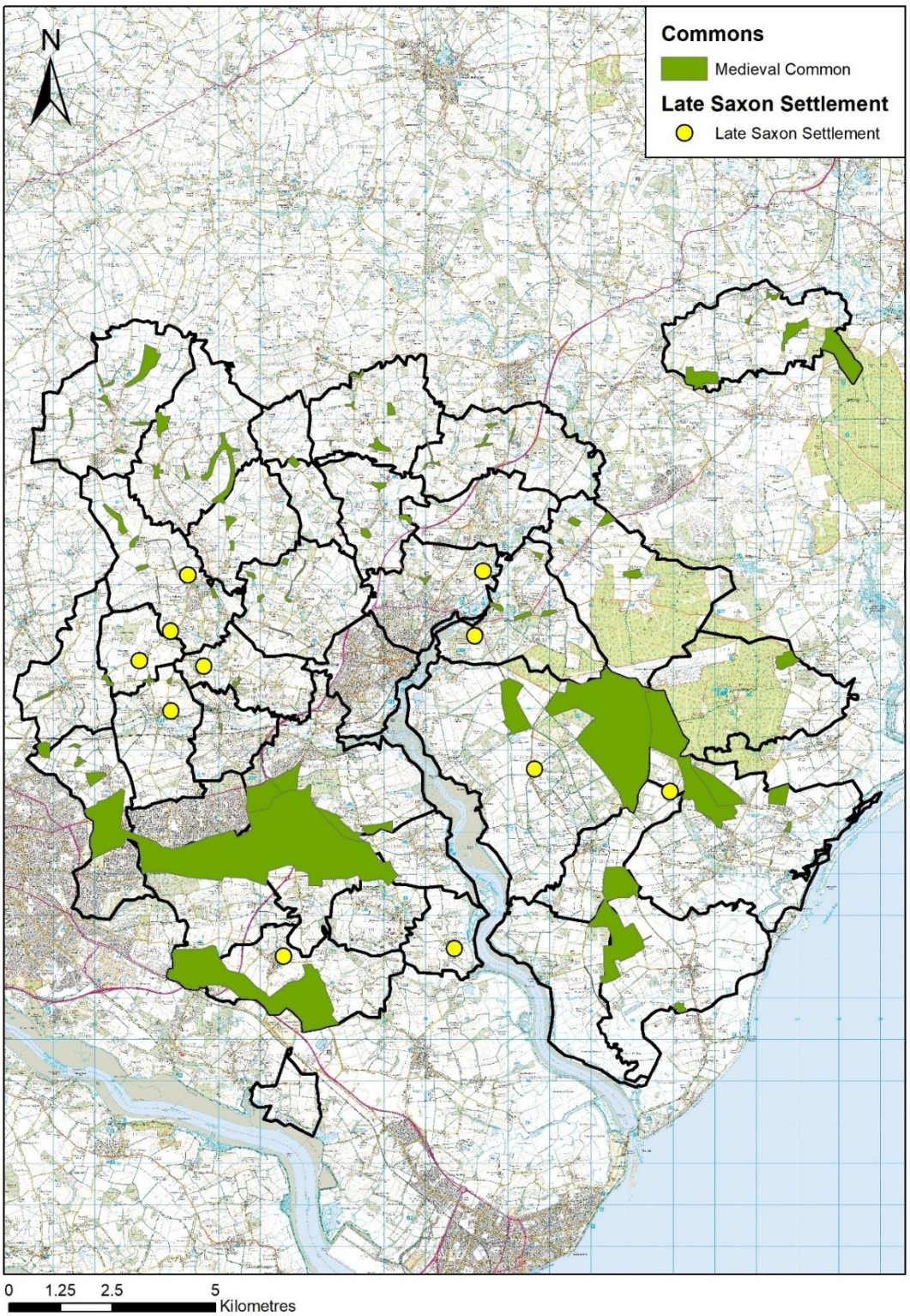

Figure 8.13: the distribution of Late Saxon settlement and commons as recorded by Hodskinson in 1783 and nineteenth-century Tithe Apportionment maps. Areas of 'ghost common' have also been included. This includes only those areas that were once common areas of grazing and excludes areas of several grazing, such as privatised areas of Sutton Heath. The lack of association between Late Saxon occupation sites and areas of waste as recorded in 1783 suggests that the post-medieval form of commons, and their attendant settlements is the result of the subsequent expansion of settlement and cultivation. Source: DVSA 1-37.

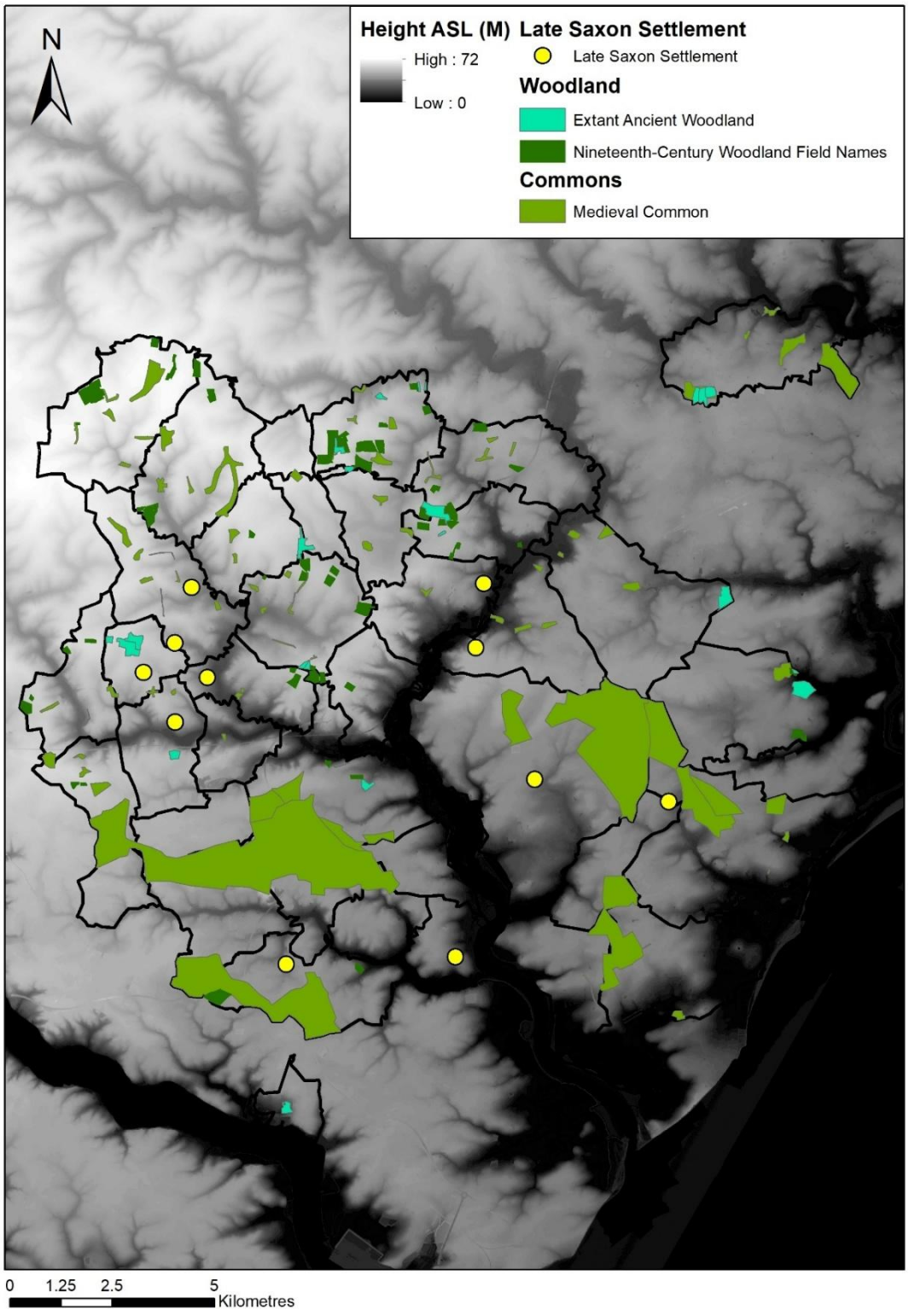

Figure 8.14: while a larger number of settlements could indeed be found on the interfluves, these remained distant from the margins of commons and greens as recorded in the eighteenth century, suggesting that the final form of common edge settlement was the result of post-conquest developments. Source: DVSA 1-37.

Figure 8.15: Although beyond the study area, Silverlace Green, Parham remains one of the best-preserved areas of common grazing in East Suffolk, owing to the widespread enclosure and cultivation of many of the small greens in the region.

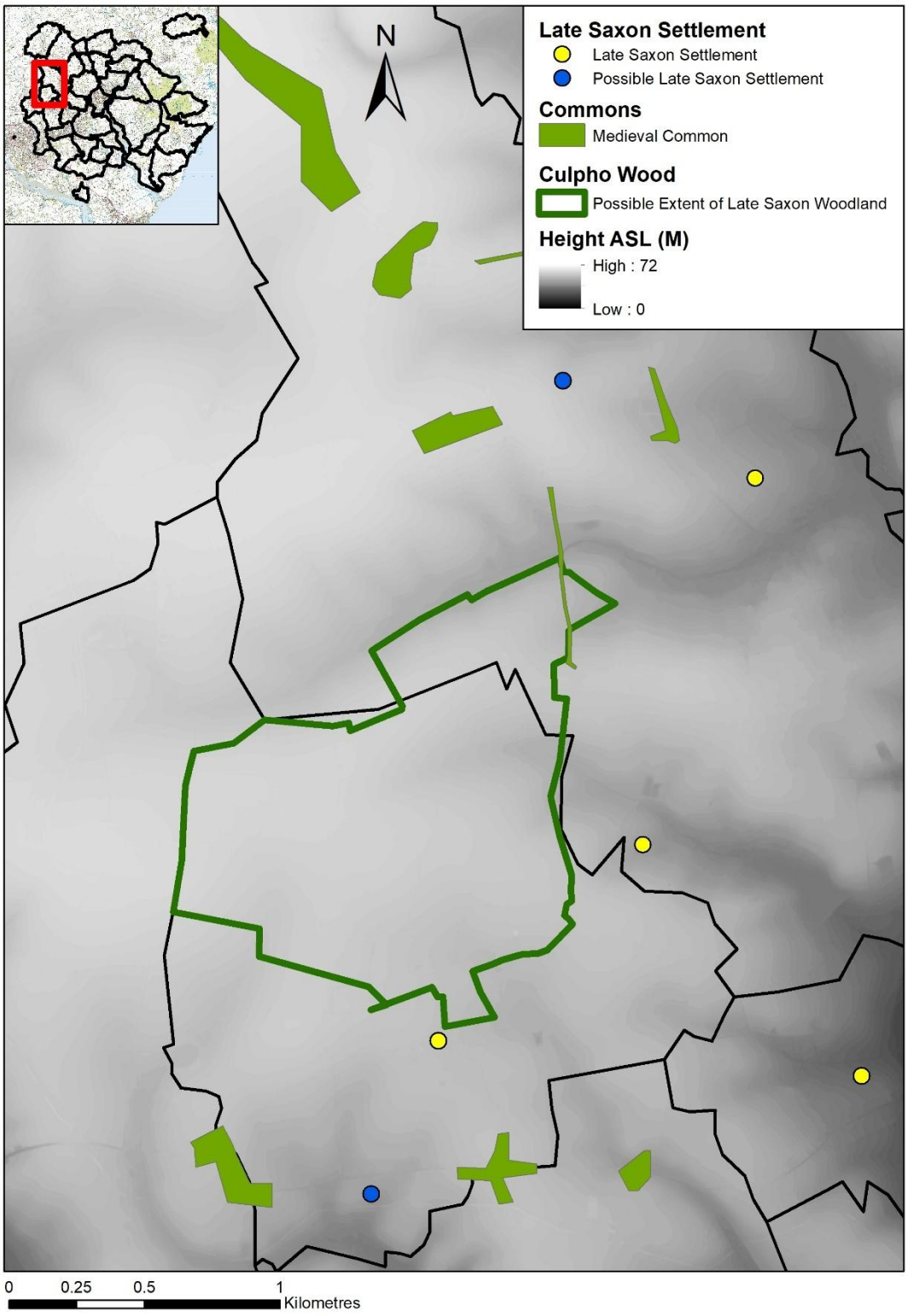

Figure 8.16: the distribution of archaeologically attested and possible Late Saxon settlements in Culpho and surrounding areas. Many of these sites were likely located on the margins of common wastes, the extent of which was reduced by assarting in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Source: DVSA 3, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 34 and PAS.

The Chronology of 'Common Edge Drift'

As noted in Chapter Four, the precise chronology of 'common edge drift' remains unclear, owing to the reliance upon ambiguously dated Thetford ware scatters to understand this settlement change. While the association between these possible common edge sites and metalwork recorded with the PAS is limited, scatters of metalwork recovered from the clay-covered interfluves more widely may offer opportunities to refine the chronology of this settlement change.[616]

It has been laid out above that limited evidence for the settlement and cultivation of the uplands of High Suffolk may be found in the eighth and early ninth centuries. Scatters of metalwork recovered from the 'wolds' in the study area suggest that this process continued, and indeed accelerated, throughout the later ninth and tenth centuries, followed by a rapid expansion of interfluve activity in the eleventh century.[617] It is important to reiterate, however, that these scatters are not associated with the margins of commons and greens as recorded on post-medieval cartographic sources; it is not until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that small spreads of metalwork widely occur on the margins of commons in the study area. Such evidence again suggests that, while occupation around the margins of waste had indeed emerged in the Late Saxon period, the post-medieval form of commons, and the coterminous occupation around their margins, did not develop until the twelfth century, at the earliest.

This chronology is somewhat divergent from that proposed in other areas of East Anglia, with fieldwalking surveys in Norfolk, for example, suggesting that the margins of many commons as recorded on Faden's 1797 county map were settled in the eleventh century. Hales Green in the south of the county, for example, was associated with a series of Late Saxon farmsteads, while settlement around the margins of some of the greens in Great and Little Fransham had apparently emerged in the pre-conquest period.[618] Such chronological variation goes against much of recent historiography, which has tended to view the development of greenside settlement in the East Anglian claylands as a unified process. Such patterns may derive from the differing pace of arable expansion.[619] It is plausible that Norfolk, or some areas of the county at least, witnessed a comparatively early expansion of cultivation compared to the study area, with the maximum extent of arable farming largely reached by the time Thetford ware was replaced

[616] Williamson, 'The Franshams in Context', 167; Rogerson, *Fransham*, 61; Wade-Martins, *Launditch Hundred*, 88; Martin, 'Medieval Settlement', 235–37.
[617] Such notions are, however, based upon a relatively small dataset.
[618] Rogerson, *Fransham*, 61.
[619] It is not here suggested that the county boundary forms the border between these areas of apparently early and late cultivation expansion.

in *c.* 1100. In the study area, meanwhile, assarting continued into the post-Conquest period, with the frontier of cultivation, and coterminous occupation, only reaching the margins of commons and greens in the centuries before the Black Death. In such circumstances, Late Saxon settlements lay divorced from the margins of later commons, the result of subsequent assarting severing the relationship between these settlement sites and grazing resources. That the commons of the Norfolk claylands are, on the whole, larger than their southern counterparts may corroborate such assertions.

Importantly, this varied chronology is borne out by test pits excavated in the region, although the number of such studies in areas of greenside settlement is admittedly limited. In Chediston in North Suffolk, for example, test pit excavations around Chediston Green revealed no evidence of Late Saxon settlement, while Thetford ware was recovered surrounding the parish church, as well as from three currently occupied settlements in the parish. These farmsteads are located on the interfluves between the parish church and the present green, suggesting that they represent an early phase of common edge expansion before assarting subsequently reduced the extent of the waste. Similarly, at Hesset in West Suffolk, no Late Saxon pottery was recovered from the margins of Hesset Green, while evidence of occupation was identified from the area surrounding the parish church, suggesting that the expansion of settlement to the margins of the common waste had not taken place by the end of the eleventh century. At Carleton Rode, in the South Norfolk claylands, meanwhile, extensive evidence of Late Saxon occupation was recovered from Flaxlands, a common edge hamlet in the parish, suggesting that the maximum extent of assarting had been reached by *c.* 1100. Such evidence, although limited in scale, further suggests the possibility of significant variation in the chronology of greenside settlement in East Anglia.[620]

Cattle and Common Edge Drift

Despite the long history of debate surrounding the chronology of 'common edge drift', the factors underpinning this distinctive settlement pattern have been much less widely discussed.[621] The development of this settlement form has largely been viewed through the lens of arable farming, with it often implied, and indeed rarely directly challenged, that common edge settlement emerged as a response to demographic growth and the expansion of

[620] For the test-pitting in Chediston, Hesset and Carleton Rode, see Lewis, 'Exploring Black Holes'.
[621] Wade-Martins only devotes a single paragraph to the factors underpinning greenside settlement, for example, while Warner offers no explanation at all. See Wade-Martins, *Launditch Hundred*, 88; Warner, *Clayland Colonization*.

cultivation.[622] Such notions are, however, insufficient to explain the emergence of common edge settlement; settlements strung around the margins of greens occur in areas in which vast tracts of woodland and waste remained, such as around Hatfield and Writtle in Essex, suggesting that other factors underpinned the development of this settlement form.

Changing patterns of livestock husbandry can, however, explain the emergence of common edge settlement forms. While the claylands remained a landscape of cattle farming, the expansion of cultivation began to carve up the waste, plausibly necessitating a change in the management of cattle. This is not to suggest that the growth of cereal farming placed pressure on grazing resources; significant areas of the landscape remained uncultivated in the Late Saxon period, carrying woodland and wood pasture. Rather, it is here suggested that this expansion of cultivation resulted in the *fracturing* of once larger areas of waste, rather than its wholesale eradication. This, combined with the greater division of resources between neighbouring communities, caused once unified areas of wood pasture to become fragmented. As such, cattle were no longer left to roam in the upland pastures seasonally and were, instead, more intensively managed, turned out onto grazing resources on a daily basis by individual peasant farmers.[623] In order to facilitate this cattle management, farmsteads drifted to the margins of the waste on which cattle could be grazed during the day before being stalled in barns and yards overnight, as well as during the colder months. It can, perhaps, be suggested that parishes in which occupation extended onto the interfluves at an early date were areas in which the upland pastures became fragmented relatively early, while grazing resources were less disjointed in those parishes in which common edge settlement emerged later. Importantly, while, as suggested in Chapter Seven, early agricultural texts refer to the seasonal movement of livestock, later sources, such as the anonymous *Seneschaucie,* written in the thirteenth century, refer only to the daily movement of cattle, suggesting that a shift in husbandry had indeed occurred.[624]

The lack of common edge settlement in areas of acid sand can also fruitfully be viewed in terms

[622] Williamson, 'The Franshams in Context', 169–73.
[623] Seasonal transhumance continued into the High Middle Ages in areas in which expanses of grazing remained contiguous. See Harold Fox, *Dartmoor's Alluring Uplands: Transhumance and Pastoral Management in the Middle Ages* (University of Exeter Press, 2015); Mark Gardiner, 'The Changing Character of Transhumance in Early and Later Medieval England', in *Historical Archaeologies of Transhumance Across Europe*, ed. Eugene Costello and Eva Svensson (Taylor & Francis, 2018).
[624] Elizabeth Lamond, ed., *Walter of Henley's Husbandry, Together with an Anonymous Husbandry, Seneschaucie, and Robert Grosseteste's Rules*, trans. Elizabeth Lamond (Longmans, Green, and co., 1890), 113.

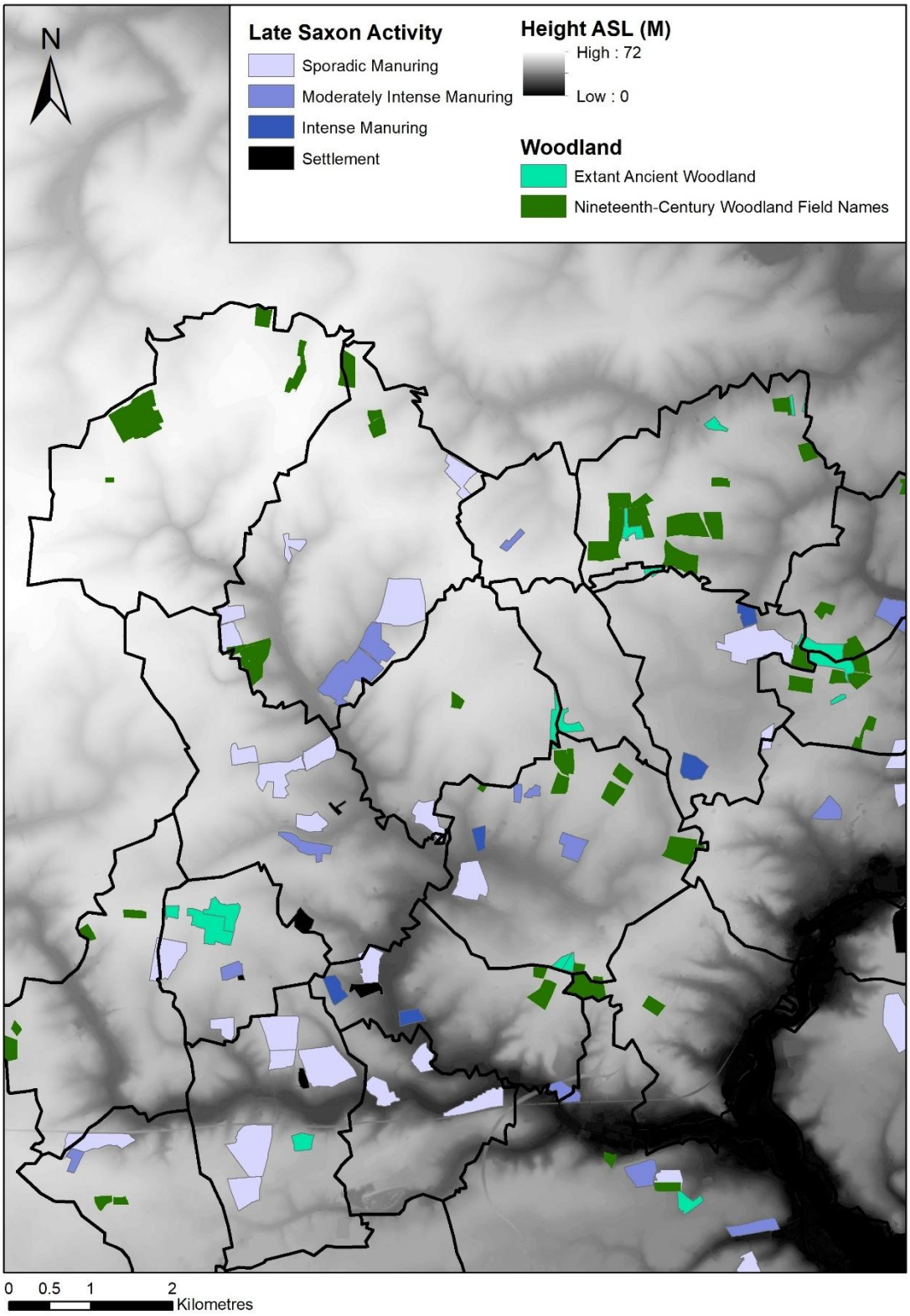

Figure 8.17: the distribution of Late Saxon cultivation in the claylands of the study area and its relationship with areas of extant ancient woodland, as well as fieldnames on the Tithe Apportionment maps relating to woodland or its clearance. While the expansion of the cultivation did not cause a vast reduction in the area of grazing available to Late Saxon farmers, the growth of arable farming, as well as the greater division of resources between communities, resulted in the fragmentation of once coherent areas of grazing. Source: DVSA 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34, 35,

of the environmentally structured patterns of livestock farming laid out above. While, in the claylands, the management of cattle was carried out by individual farmers, the sheep of the Sandlings were placed in a communal flock, managed by a shepherd; such sheep were moved daily from the heathland grazing resources to the arable landscape. As the heaths remained extensive and flocks of sheep were moved communally, there was little impetus for peasant farmers to move to the margins of common grazing resources to intensively manage livestock as occurred in the claylands. Such subregional variations in livestock husbandry and landscape exploitation may, therefore, have underpinned the development of the settlement patterns of Late Saxon and High Medieval East Suffolk.

Metalwork and Late Saxon Manors

Although it has been posited in Chapter Seven that extensive and pervasive social differentiation and, possibly therefore, the origins of manorialism, can be found in the Middle Saxon period, it is in the Late Saxon centuries that widespread documentary evidence for the manors of the High Middle Ages in East Anglia can be found.[625]

It has been demonstrated in Chapter Two that Late Saxon social differentiation is manifested in metalwork scatters from the plough soil. High status sites are marked by significant spreads of both pottery and metalwork including elite indicators such as precious metal items, coinage and equestrian fittings. Low status farmsteads, on the other hand, while delineated by pottery scatters, are often marked by only limited quantities of utilitarian items such as buckles and pins or, indeed, no metalwork at all.

The distribution of metalwork in the study area reveals substantial variations in the density of ploughzone scatters. While the Sandlings is characterised by extensive metalwork scatters, the claylands are marked by only limited spreads of material, despite the presence of numerous occupation sites identified by fieldwalking. Settlements such as those in Grundisburgh, Clopton and Great Bealings are marked by no metalwork, despite metal detecting taking place in the area, suggesting that such sites were farmsteads of relatively equal, low social status. Indeed, only 14% of all Late Saxon metalwork was located in areas of clay soil, implying the presence of relatively limited wealth in High Suffolk (Figure 8.18).[626] As in earlier periods, the claylands

[625] Rosamond Faith, *The English Peasantry and the Growth of Lordship* (Leicester University Press, 1999).
[626] See, for example, PAS SF-92B213 and SF8888. 31% of metalwork of all periods was recovered from High Suffolk, suggesting that such patterns go beyond recovery bias.

appear a somewhat socially undifferentiated landscape, a countryside cultivated by peasant proprietors.

This is not to suggest, however, that High Suffolk was *entirely* undifferentiated; small concentrations of metalwork imply some degree of social polarisation. Settlement associated with Dallinghoo Hall, for example, was marked by a small spread of metalwork, including equestrian items, while concentrations of metalwork including coinage and horse fittings are also apparent at Otley and Blaxhall.[627] These scatters are, however, more limited in both distribution and scale compared to their Sandlings counterparts. While the largest spread of metalwork in the claylands is comprised of just five artefacts, for example, this appears minor compared to those in the Sandlings, with scatters of eleven and eighteen artefacts recorded in Sutton and Eyke respectively.

While the claylands was marked by limited social differentiation, significant wealth, denoted by metalwork scatters, is apparent in the Sandlings, with 86% of all metalwork recovered from areas of acid sand. This wealth was not, however, evenly distributed. While the settlement surrounding Hemley church, for example, was marked only by a scatter of pottery, the Hemley Hall and White Hall sites lying to the north are demarcated by large spreads of metalwork, including elite indicator items such as harness and stirrup fittings (Figures 8.19 and 8.20).[628] Again, the Sandlings was marked by an intensely polarised society.

These variations in social structure are also manifested in Late Saxon documentary sources for the first time. The limited social differentiation of the claylands is reflected in Domesday Book, with a relatively free society characterised by large numbers of freemen and sokemen evident (Figures 8.21 and 8.22). The landholding structure of High Suffolk was also relatively fragmented, characterised by numerous small holdings per vill (Figure 8.23). This is, again, not to suggest that there was no social differentiation in High Suffolk; variations in the size of holdings in each vill and the presence of small numbers of cottars and bordars indeed suggest some degree of social polarisation.[629] This appears, however, more limited than in the Sandlings, a landscape

[627] See, for example, PAS SF-287A62 and SF-908F05.
[628] See, for example, PAS SF-1F8540, SF-5FD14C and SF-C06A14.
[629] Compare the varied sizes of freemen holdings in Grundisburgh, for example, ranging from 1 carucate to 5 acres shared between two freemen. See Alexander Richard Rumble, ed., *Domesday Book: Suffolk (Part One)* (Phillimore, 1986), 6,122; Alexander Richard Rumble, ed., *Domesday Book: Suffolk (Part Two)* (Phillimore, 1986), 67,10.

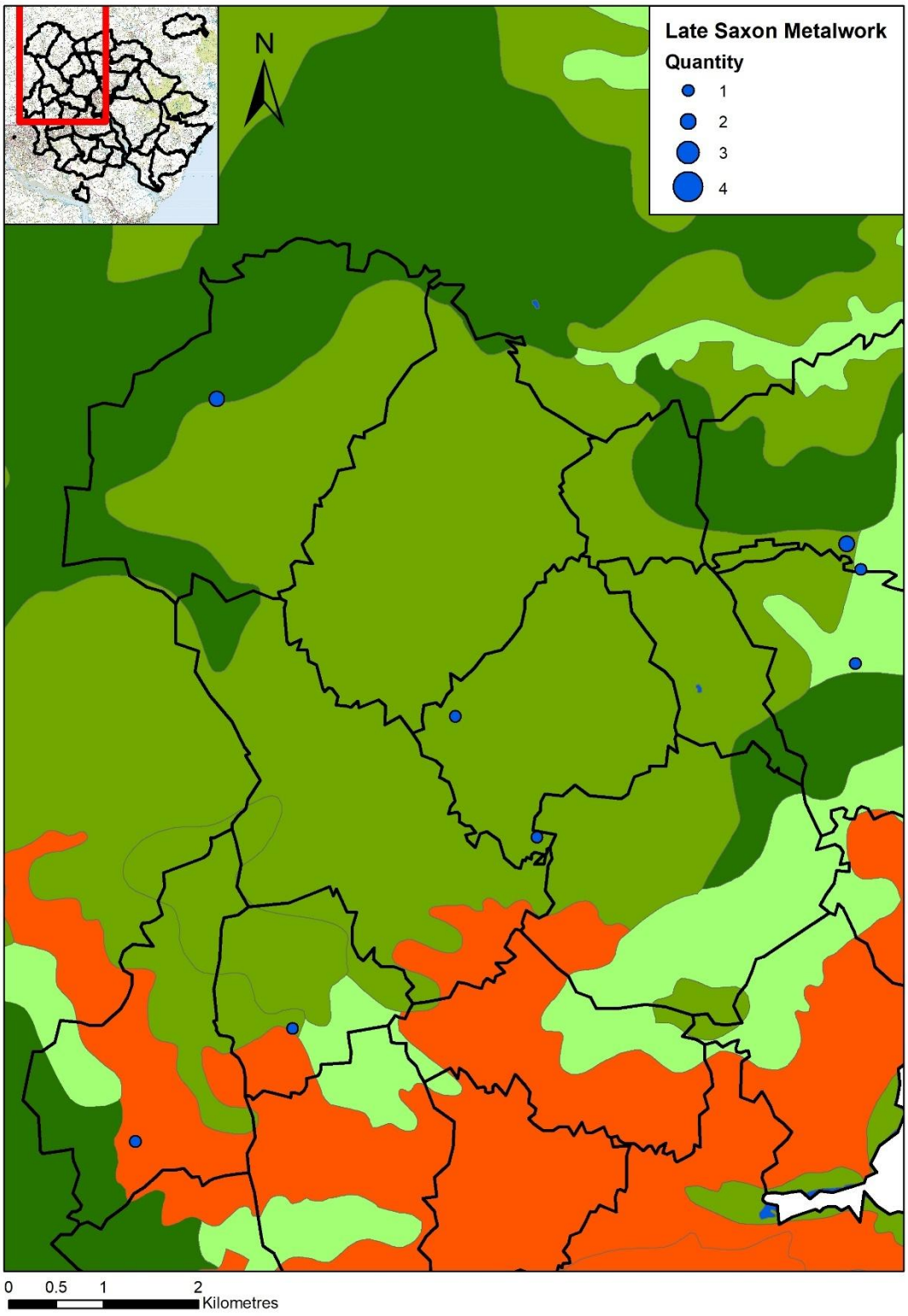

Figure 8.18: the distribution of metalwork in the claylands of the study area. While some degree of social polarisation is indeed implied by these spreads of metalwork, the claylands appears a relatively undifferentiated landscape, particularly compared to the Sandlings. Source: PAS.

Figure 8.19: Late Saxon elite indicators recorded with the PAS in the study area. Although such objects are occasionally recovered from the claylands, suggesting some degree of social differentiation in such areas, these artefacts are more common in areas of acid sand. **1.** SF-604917 copper alloy sword pommel. **2.** SF-92B213 silver brooch. **3.** SF-908F05 copper alloy stirrup fitting. **4.** SF-2E735D silver penny of Edgar. Images not to scale.

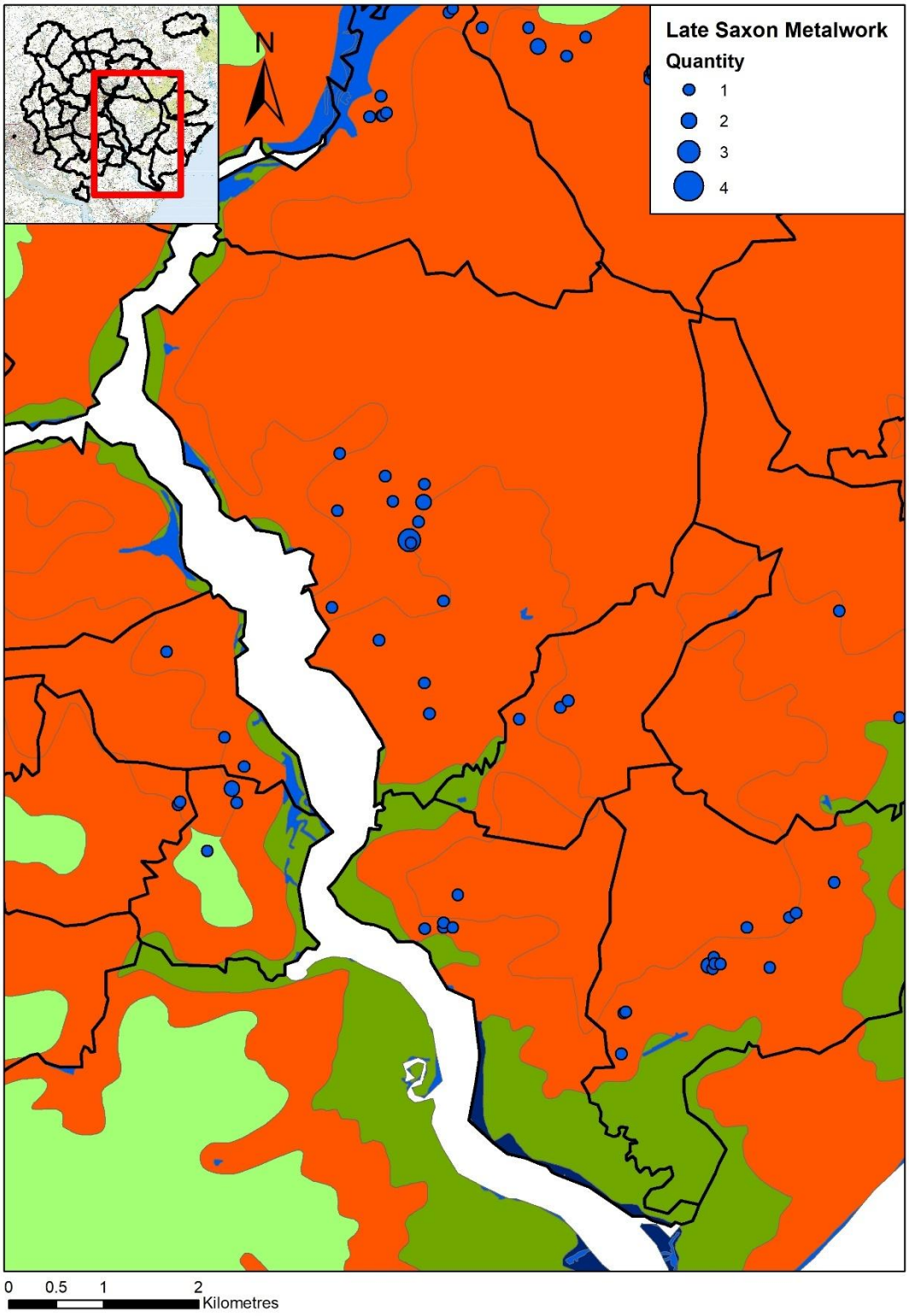

Figure 8.20: the distribution of metalwork in the Sandlings. While the claylands is characterised by limited social differentiation, spreads of metalwork in the Sandlings imply a polarised society. Source: PAS.

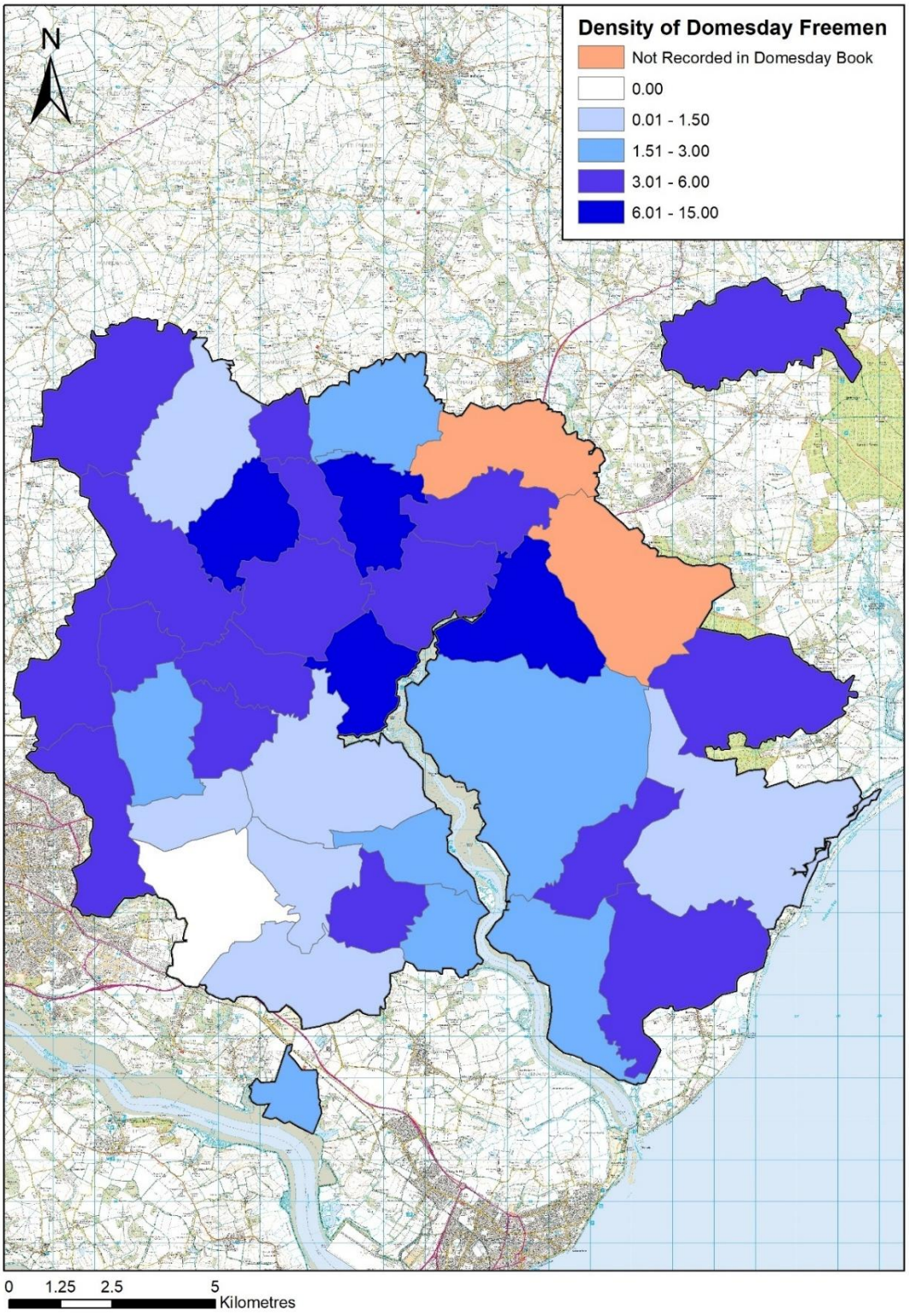

Figure 8.21: the density of Domesday freemen per 100 hectares in the study area, calculated only for those vills that went on to become parishes. It is clear that the claylands was characterised by a greater density of freemen than the more socially differentiated Sandlings (after Rumble, 1986).

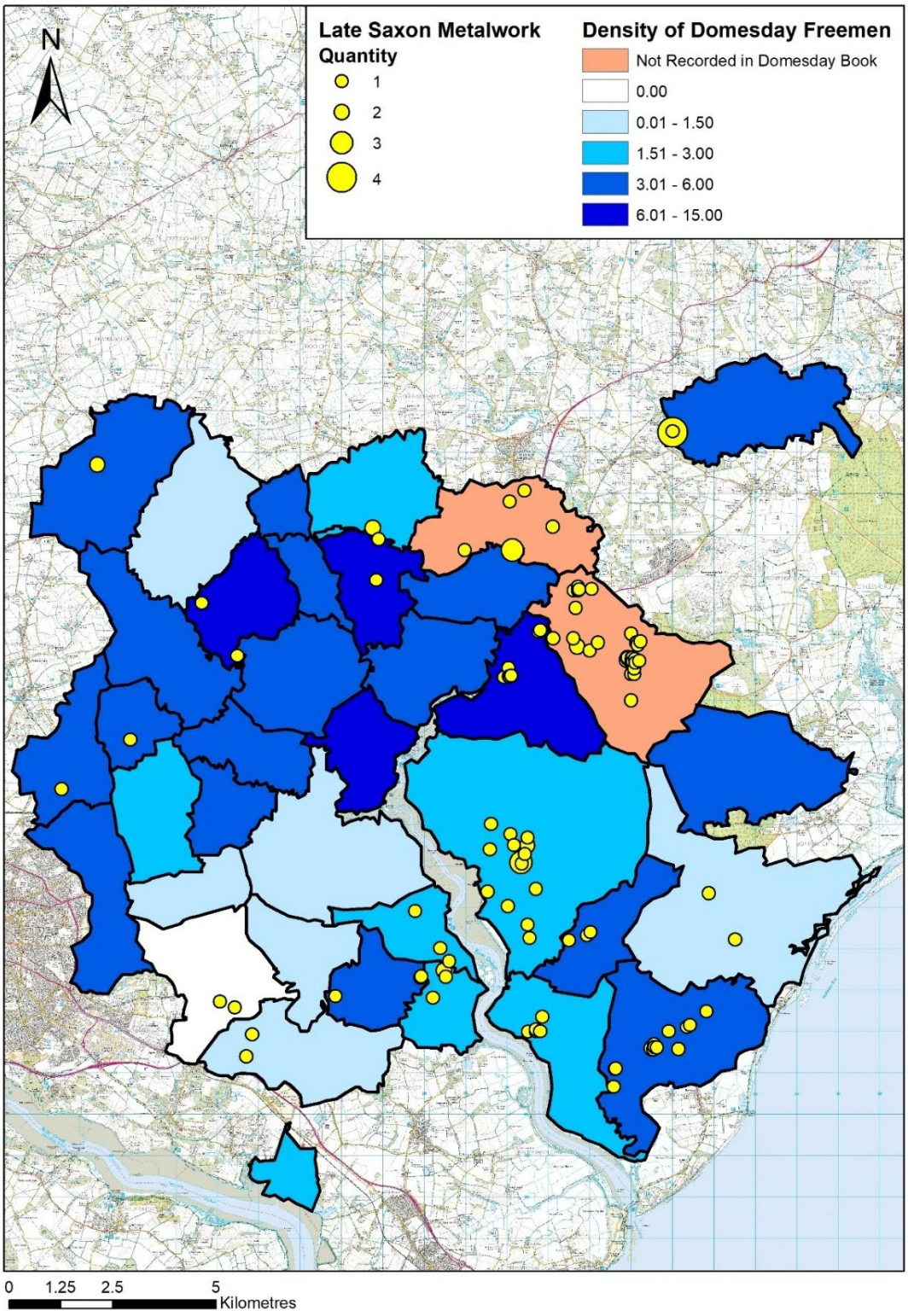

Figure 8.22: the density of Domesday freemen per 100 hectares in the study area, calculated only for those vills that went on to become parishes, compared with the distribution of Late Saxon metalwork (after Rumble, 1986). Those areas characterised by low densities of freemen are marked by significant spreads of metalwork.

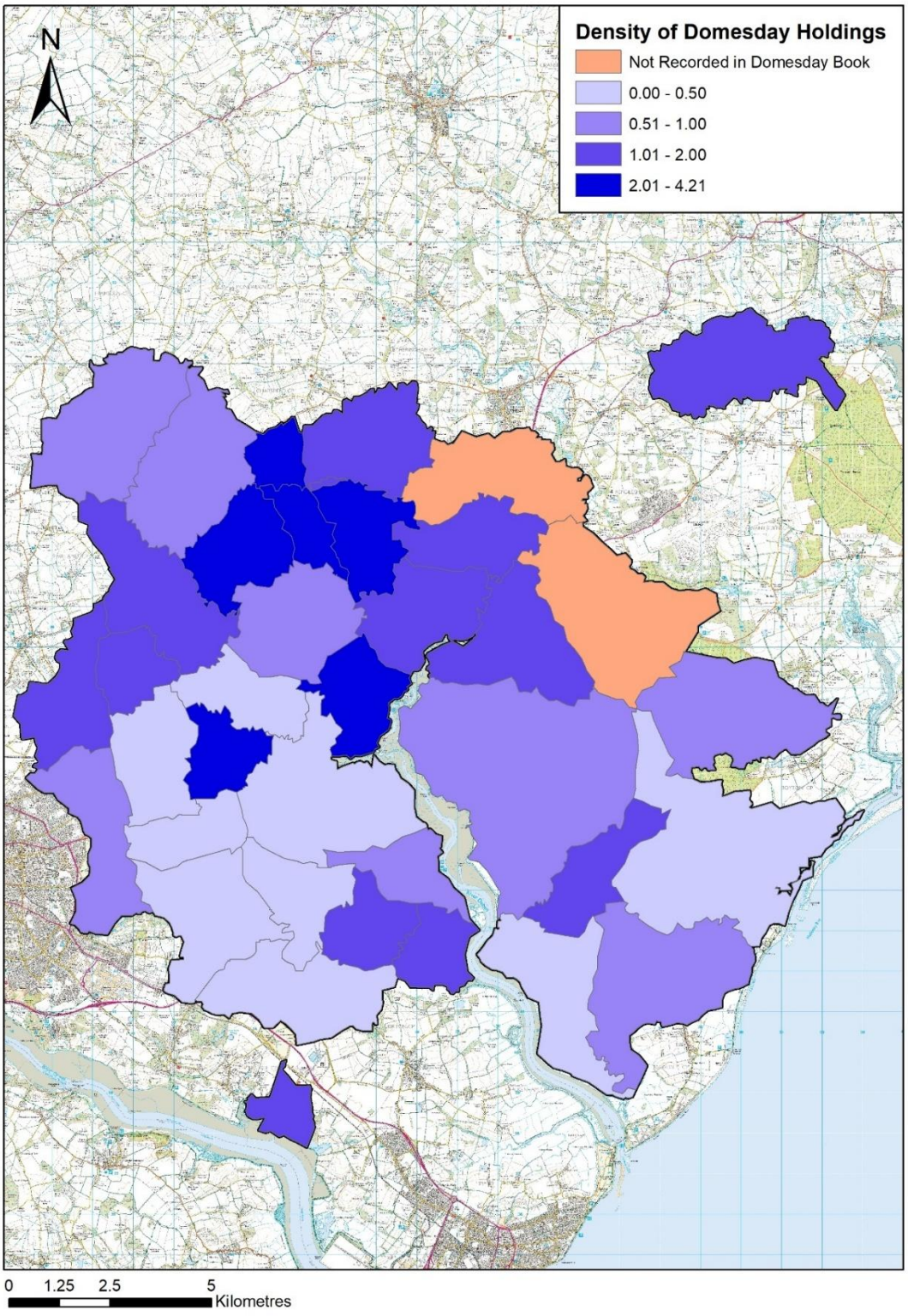

Figure 8.23: the number of individual Domesday holdings per 100 hectares in the study area, plotted only for those vills that went on to become parishes (after Rumble, 1986). It is apparent that the landholding structure of the claylands was much more fragmented than in the Sandlings.

characterised by significant numbers of unfree peasants and a more unified landholding structure, with small numbers of large holdings and manors recorded.[630]

Late Saxon Arable Farming

This settlement expansion was coterminous with a sizeable increase in the arable area. While 450 hectares were cultivated in the Middle Saxon period, diffuse scatters of Thetford ware suggest that at least 728 hectares were under the plough in Late Saxon East Suffolk, an increase of 62% (Figure 8.24). Indeed, the limited quantities of pottery in circulation within settlement sites, and, therefore, the lack of pottery entering middens, implies that the scale of arable expansion may be greater than attested in the ploughzone.

A wider range of environments were cultivated in the Late Saxon period than at any time since the fourth century. Arable farming widely expanded onto the clay-covered uplands, with the heavy soils of the Beccles and Hanslope Associations, including those soils prone to waterlogging on the level interfluves, brought under the plough. Areas of Newport 4 soil, lying on the Sandlings plateaux, were also cultivated in this period, suggesting a sizeable expansion of cultivation into more marginal environments, if only sporadically. The extent of this cultivation on the interfluves should not, however, be overstated; the majority of arable fields remained in the fertile, tractable landscapes of river valleys, often near to settlement sites (Figure 8.25). While the impact of the distance decay model of manuring must be noted, such patterns also likely emerged from a preference for exploiting the fertile and tractable soils found in these environments. That much arable cultivation remained in river valleys may imply that the spread of heavy ploughing technology was not as rapid as some have suggested. It is plausible that those farmers settling and cultivating the heaviest clays were those with access to this technology, while those who remained in the river valleys employed improved ards, able to cultivate light land but not the heaviest clayland soils.

It is often suggested that this expansion of cultivation was most marked in the claylands. Such notions are corroborated in the study area, with the arable area of High Suffolk expanding by

[630] George Barlow, 'The Landscape of Domesday Suffolk', *Landscape History* 32 (2011): 19–36; Darby, *Domesday Geography*, 152–208.

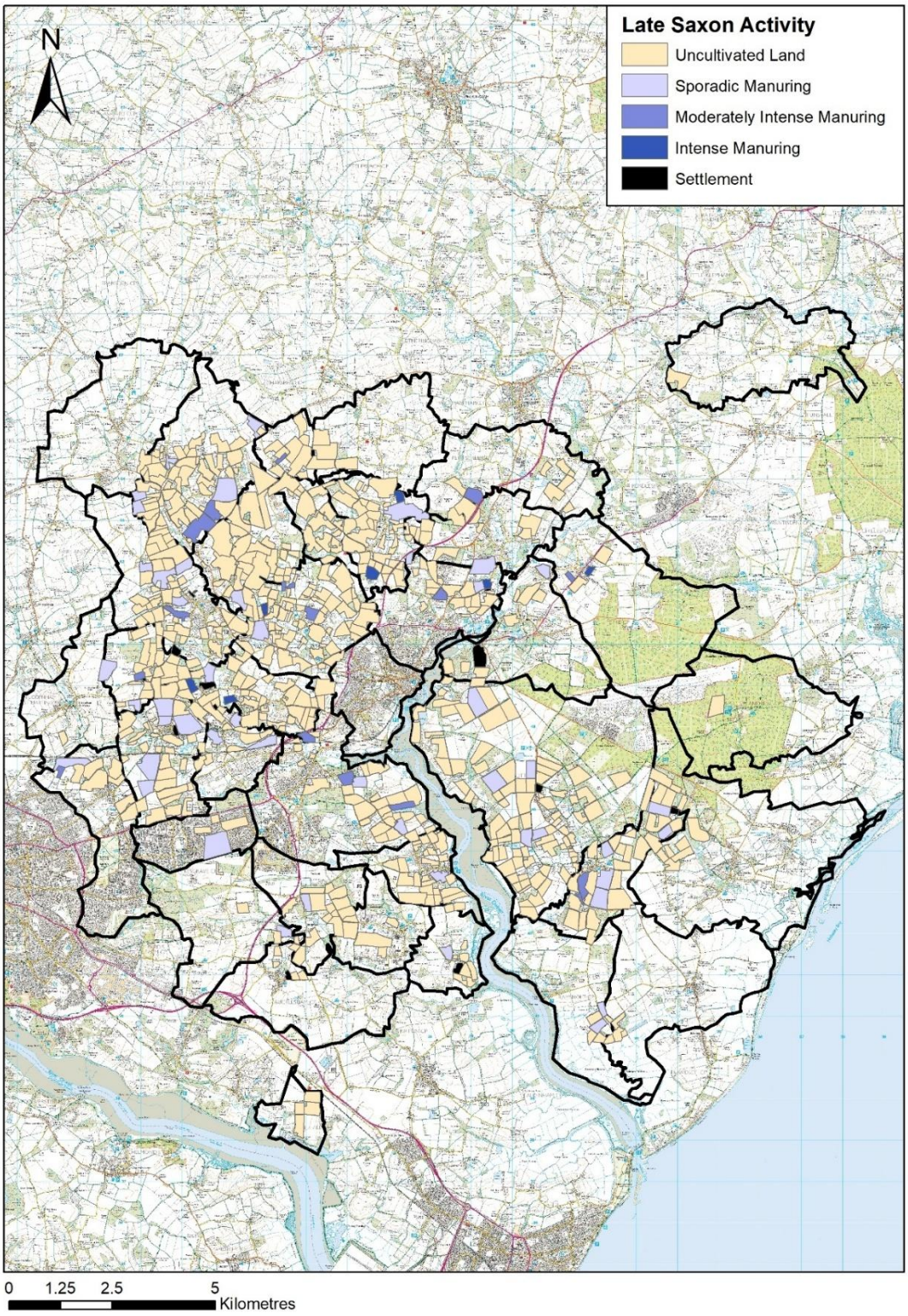

Figure 8.24: the distribution of cultivated land in Late Saxon East Suffolk as attested by pottery scatters. Although cerealisation continued apace in the Late Saxon period, much uncultivated land remained available to farmers. Source: DVSA 1-37.

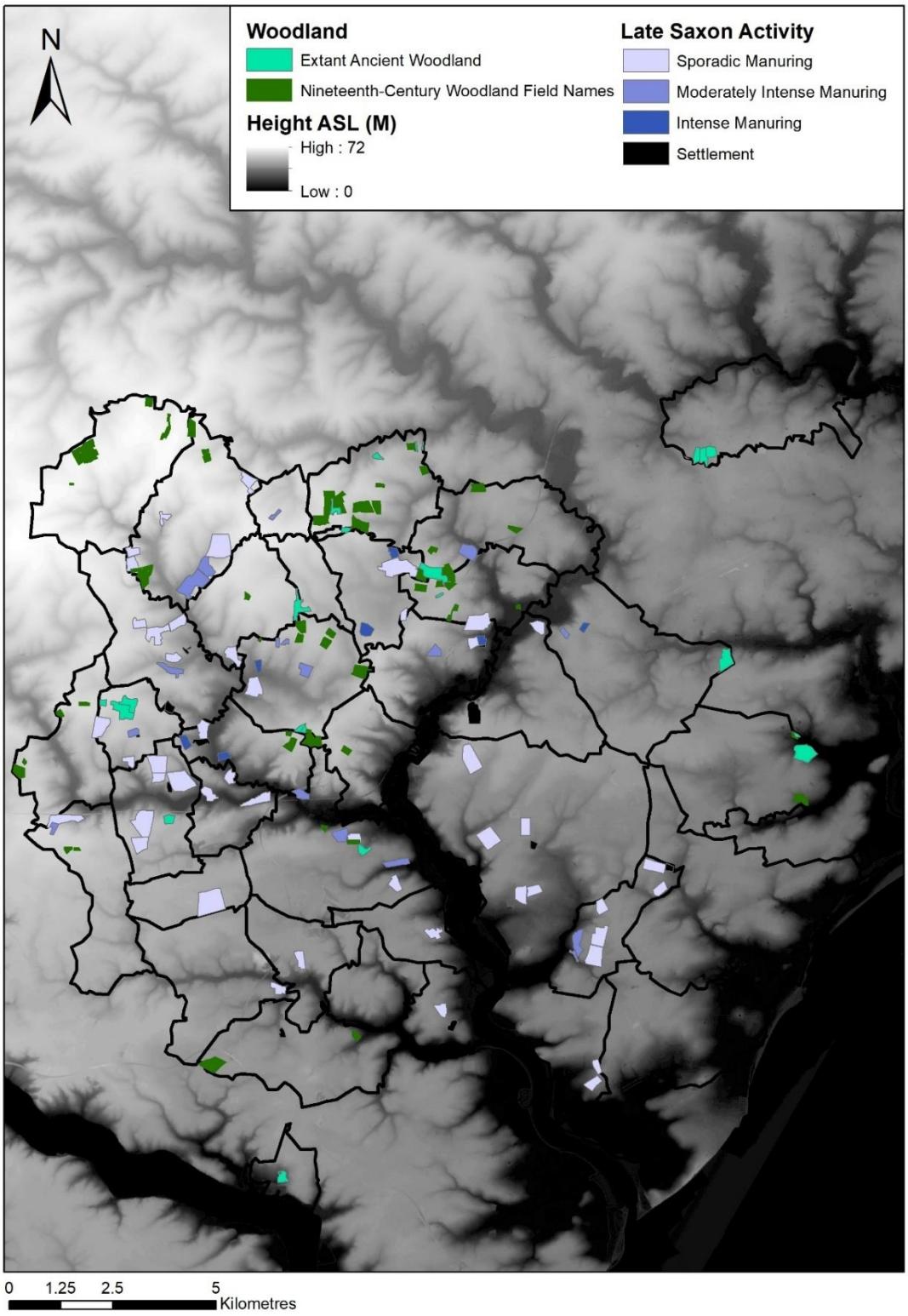

Figure 8.25: the extent of Late Saxon agriculture and its association with topography. While settlement increasingly extended out of the river valleys in this period, cultivation remained, on the whole, a phenomenon of the river valleys. Source: DVSA 1-37.

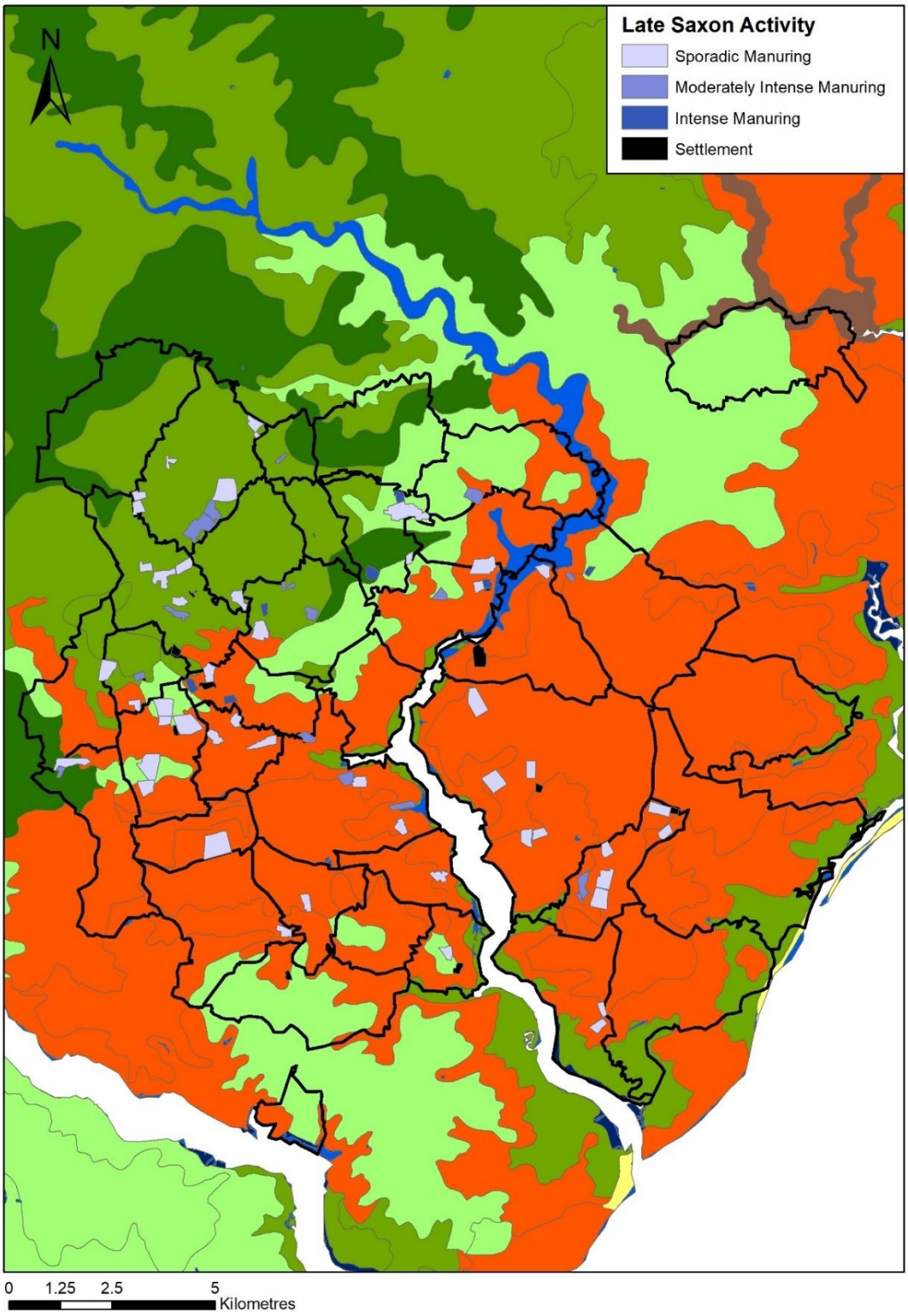

Figure 8.26: the extent of Late Saxon cultivation and its relationship with the soils of the region. Although the claylands became the centre of agrarian farming, cultivation continued in the Sandlings. Source: DVSA 1-37.

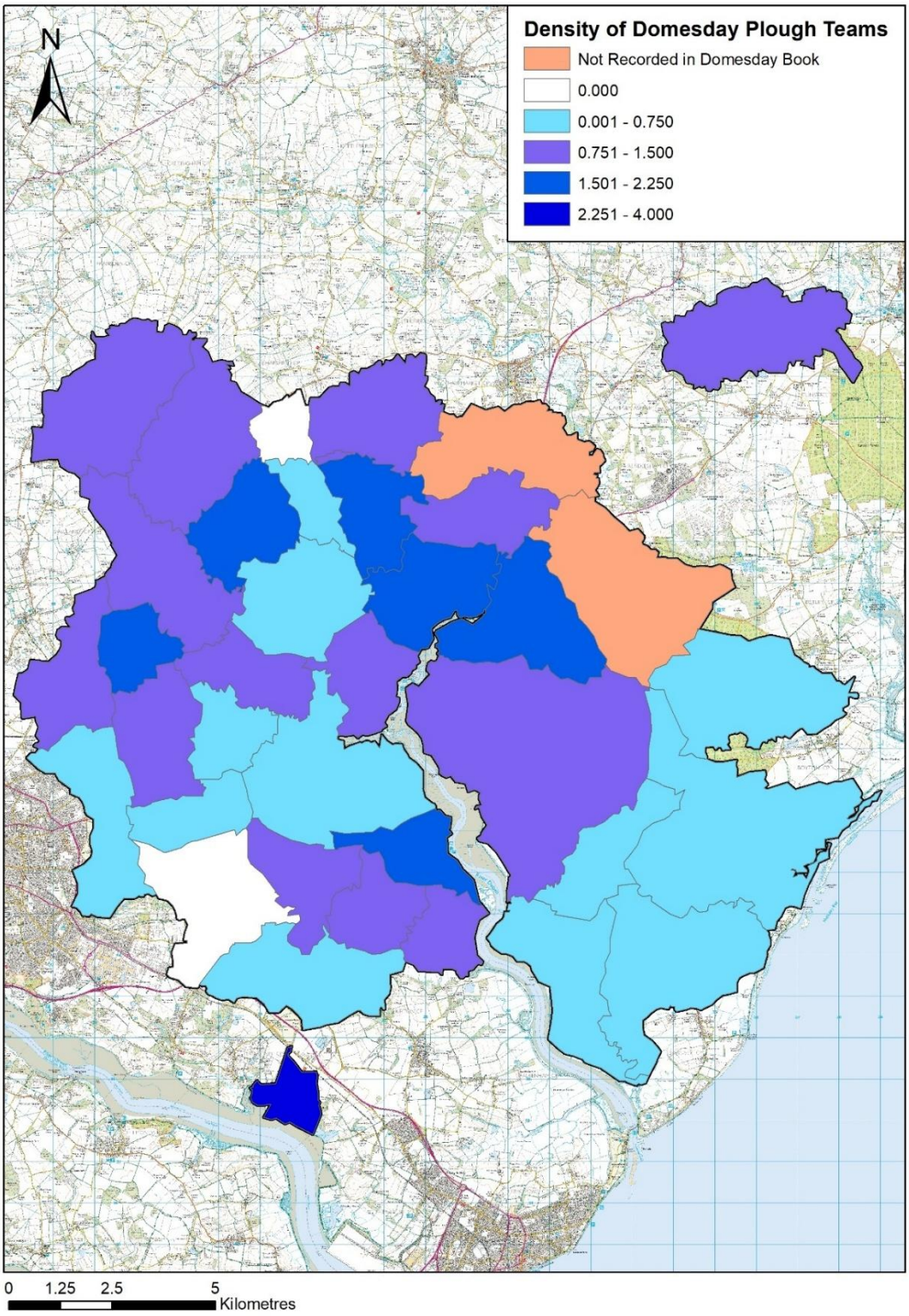

Figure 8.27: the density of Domesday plough teams in the study area, expressed as the number of ploughs per 100 hectares, calculated only for those vills that went on to become parishes (after Rumble, 1986). Although the density of plough teams was greatest in the claylands, large numbers of plough teams were also recorded in the Sandlings.

some 51%, perhaps the result of the relative freedom of clayland society which offered greater opportunities for assarting (Figure 8.26). Indeed, the density of Domesday plough teams in the claylands outstripped that of the Sandlings, implying significant investment in arable agriculture (Figure 8.27). Yet, this arable expansion also occurred in the Sandlings, with the area under the plough growing by as much as 77%,[631] with the numerous plough teams and mills recorded in parishes such as Shottisham implying that substantial quantities of grain were grown and processed in the region. While cultivation in the claylands undoubtedly repaid the efforts of farmers to a greater extent than in the Sandlings; an increased emphasis on cereal production occurred in all environments, not just those most suited to growing these crops.

The Chronology of Arable Expansion

The chronology of this expansion of cultivation has been much debated. It has been argued that the Middle and Late Saxon periods witnessed a revolution in farming, implying a sudden, rapid growth in arable cultivation.[632] Others, however, have suggested that the increase in cereal production occurred over a much longer period, continuing into the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[633] Although the association between metalwork scatters and arable fields is relatively limited in the study area, the methodology here employed offers insight into the chronological expansion of cultivation.

It has been suggested in Chapter Seven that a significant degree of arable expansion occurred in the Middle Saxon period, albeit from a low base, with arable farming rapidly increasing in the eighth century. Metalwork scatters from the study area suggest that this growth in cultivation continued, and indeed accelerated, throughout the Late Saxon period. Manuring scatters such as that from Sutton suggest that new land was brought under the plough in the tenth century, for example, while scatters of metalwork from the arable landscape in Burgh and Bromeswell imply further expansion in the eleventh. This increase in the cultivated area continued, however, into the post-conquest period, as attested by the lack of association between Late Saxon settlement and the margins of post-medieval commons and greens. Such evidence demonstrates that, while some have argued for the rapid expansion of arable farming, the growth of cultivation in the study area evidently occurred over a long period.

[631] This expansion is, however, from a relatively low base.
[632] Hamerow, '"FeedSax"', 4–5.
[633] Banham and Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms*, 295.

Ploughzone Archaeology and Open Fields

As noted in Chapter Four, the establishment of open field agriculture has been much discussed, although little consensus has been reached regarding the chronological development of intermixed arable holdings and the factors underpinning the emergence of open field agriculture.[634] Indeed, fieldwalking datasets have been brought to bear on the issue of open field origins, most notably in the work of Jones, who argued that intermixed arable cultivation can be identified by specific ceramic 'signatures' in the plough soil, particularly a lack of pottery in the Late Saxon period, while High Medieval open fields can be identified by dense scatters of ceramics.[635]

While this is indeed true in the English Midlands, a landscape dominated by regular open field systems, it is less clear whether such notions are pertinent for East Anglia. The open fields of Late Saxon and High Medieval East Anglia were more numerous and less regular than their Midlands counterparts, with the lands of individual farmers unevenly distributed throughout a number of fields.[636] That there is little variation in ploughzone scatters between areas apparently farmed as open field and those farmed in severalty suggests that irregular open fields cannot be identified in the ploughzone, perhaps the result of the use of manure from multiple, widely dispersed sources, as well as its uneven application, which serves to blur the association between ploughzone 'signatures' and varying farming regimes.[637]

While it is not possible to differentiate irregular open fields and peasant land farmed in severalty using ploughzone scatters, Late Saxon demesne land, or fields manured using refuse from high status sites at least, may be identified using the methodology set out in Chapter Two; such land is marked by thin spreads of both pottery and metalwork, including elite indicators (Figure 8.28). Those place-names that associate manure and dung with kings and bishops, implying that the household waste drawn from these elite sites ultimately entered arable fields, may be relevant in this context.[638]

As suggested above, much demesne land in East Suffolk was held in coherent blocks rather than interspersed with peasant holdings in the open fields, aiding in the interpretation of such land

[634] For the historiography of open fields, see Williamson, *Shaping*, 1–27.
[635] Jones, 'Signatures', 184.
[636] Regional variation within East Anglia is, however, apparent. See Martin and Satchell, *Wheare Most Inclosures Be*, 193–206.
[637] Jones, 'Signatures', 175–78; Williamson, 'Agriculture, Lords and Landscape', 221.
[638] Paul Cullen and Richard Jones, 'Manure and Middens in English Place-Names', in *Manure Matters: Historical, Archaeological and Ethnographic Perspectives*, ed. Richard Jones (Ashgate, 2012), 104.

in the ploughzone (Figure 8.29). As many as 110 hectares of Late Saxon demesne land are apparent in the study area, marked by spreads of both pottery and metalwork, although the use of the field as the basic unit of analysis limits fine interpretation of the precise borders of these blocks of demesne.[639] Perhaps unsurprisingly, manorial demesnes are most extensive in the Sandlings, owing to the strength of manorialism and the larger size of individual holdings in the area. Late Saxon manorial centres such as in Sutton were surrounded by arable fields manured largely by livestock, but also employing household waste derived from the manorial site. Importantly, the Late Saxon demesne land of Sutton, attested in the ploughzone, is congruent with its High Medieval counterpart mapped by Martin and Satchell.[640]

Figure 8.28: SF-FD7B05 copper alloy Late Saxon mount from demesne land in Sutton.

Late Saxon Livestock Husbandry

While the widely acknowledged expansion of cultivation has been both attested and quantified above, the scale of these agricultural developments should not be overextended, with only 15% of the total area surveyed by Newman cultivated in the Late Saxon centuries (Figure 8.30). Many have implied that cereal production came to supplant livestock farming in this period, with as much as one third of the Suffolk landscape under the plough in 1086. [641] The evidence from the ploughzone suggests, however, that such notions vastly overstate the extent of arable farming. Large quantities of uncultivated ground remained, managed as grazing as well as for wood and timber, much of it on the interfluves but also extending into the river valleys, suggestive of

[639] This only includes those scatters of metalwork within the area fieldwalked by Newman. Spreads of metalwork in parishes such as Alderton and Eyke suggest the presence of further demesne land.
[640] Martin and Satchell, *Wheare Most Inclosures Be*, 131–39.
[641] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 73. Bailey does, however, acknowledge some regional variation in the extent of cultivation.

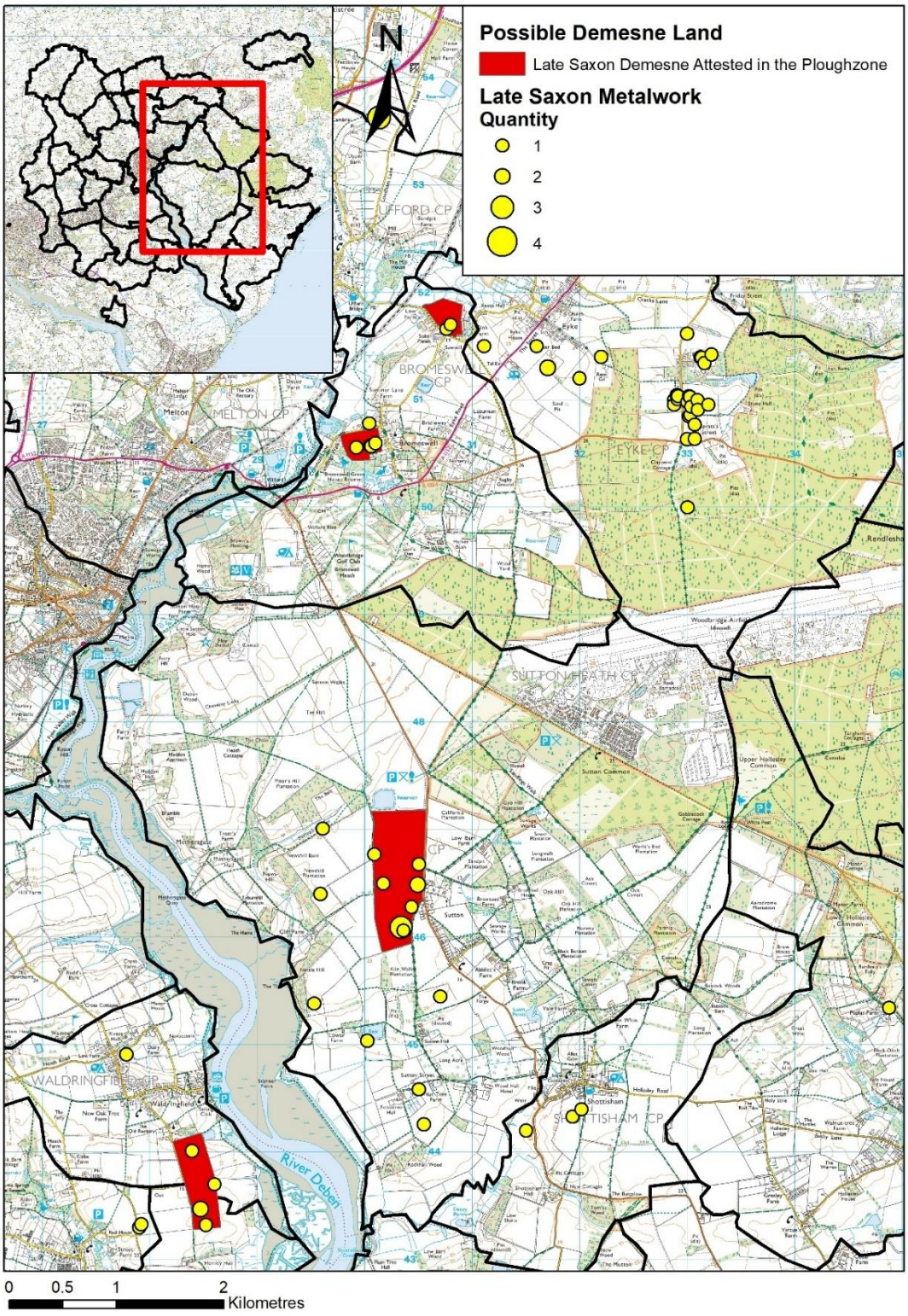

Figure 8.29: the distribution of Late Saxon demesne land in the south of the study area, plotted only for those areas fieldwalked by Newman; further demesne land is implied in the study parishes more widely by spreads of metalwork. Source: DVSA 6, 9, 14, 20, 23, 24, 29, 32, 33, 35, 36 and 37, and PAS.

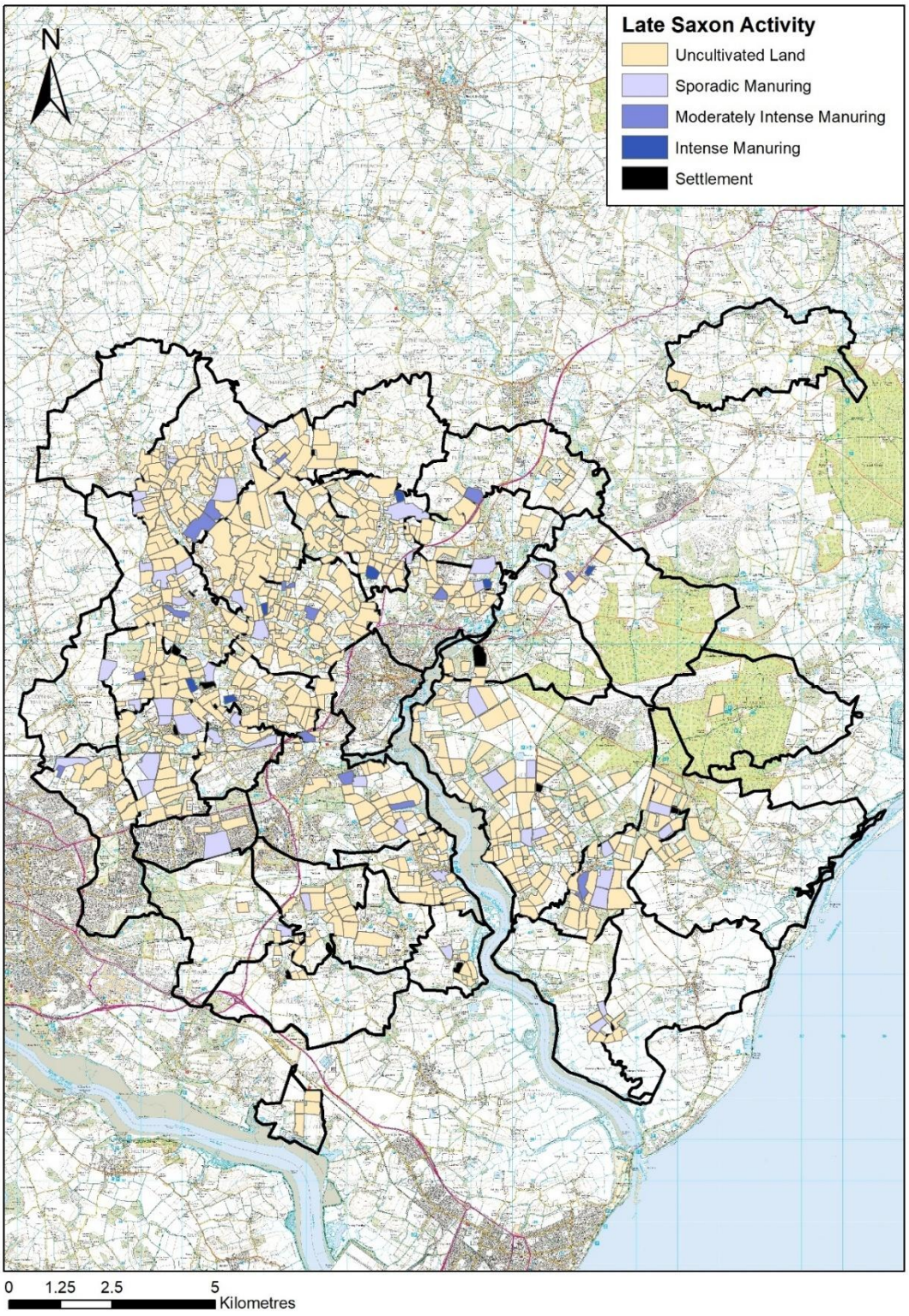

Figure 8.30: the extent of uncultivated land in the study area. While the expansion of cultivation resulted in a contraction in the waste, vast grazing resources remained available to farmers, although these were less coherent than in earlier centuries. Source: DVSA 1-37.

significant and continued investment in livestock husbandry. While the relative importance of cereal crops in contemporary agriculture and diets increased,[642] this did not entirely supplant the management of large herds of livestock, particularly in terms of the area of the landscape turned over to these agricultural systems.

As noted above, it is possible that these apparently uncultivated areas were under the plough but utilised methods of restoring fertility to the soil that leave no trace in the ploughzone; such notions are most pertinent in the Sandlings where there was indeed a greater emphasis on direct manuring, as will be discussed below. Yet, it appears unlikely that vast expanses of the infertile and intractable interfluves were brought into arable farming regimes when areas of the river valleys, long favoured for settlement and cultivation, were left unploughed. Although the expansion of cultivation encroached upon and fragmented the once contiguous grazing resources of the interfluves, substantial areas of unploughed ground remained.

That the non-arable area was more extensive in the Late Saxon period is attested by fieldwalking undertaken in the area surrounding ancient woodland. Culpho Wood, for example, was apparently significantly larger in the Late Saxon period, with the nearest evidence of cultivation over 200m from the present edge of the wood, implying that the forested area was perhaps some 100 hectares larger in the Late Saxon period than in the present day (Figure 8.31). The lack of cultivation surrounding this wood also implies that, much like the commons of the study area, the final form of ancient woodland is the result of medieval and post-medieval assarting.

As in preceding periods, subregional variations in manuring patterns are again apparent. The total area of intense manuring was, in the claylands, some 77% larger than that in the Sandlings, for example, while the area of moderately intense manuring was 61% larger in High Suffolk. Indeed, the total area of manuring per settlement was some 150% larger in the claylands than the Sandlings, suggestive of enduring variations in agricultural systems.

Such patterns again derive from differing livestock management strategies employed in these varied environments. While small numbers of sheep were also maintained in the claylands, High Suffolk was cattle country, with large herds grazed on the lush wood pastures. The expansion of cultivation and emergence of common edge settlement suggests, however, that the Late Saxon period witnessed a shift in livestock husbandry. While in preceding periods, cattle were managed seasonally, driven to upland pastures during the summer before being stalled in barns

[642] Debby Banham, '"In the Sweat of Thy Brow Shalt Thou Eat Bread": Cereals and Cereal Production in the Anglo-Saxon Landscape', in *The Landscape Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Martin J. Ryan and Nicholas J. Higham (Boydell & Brewer, 2010).

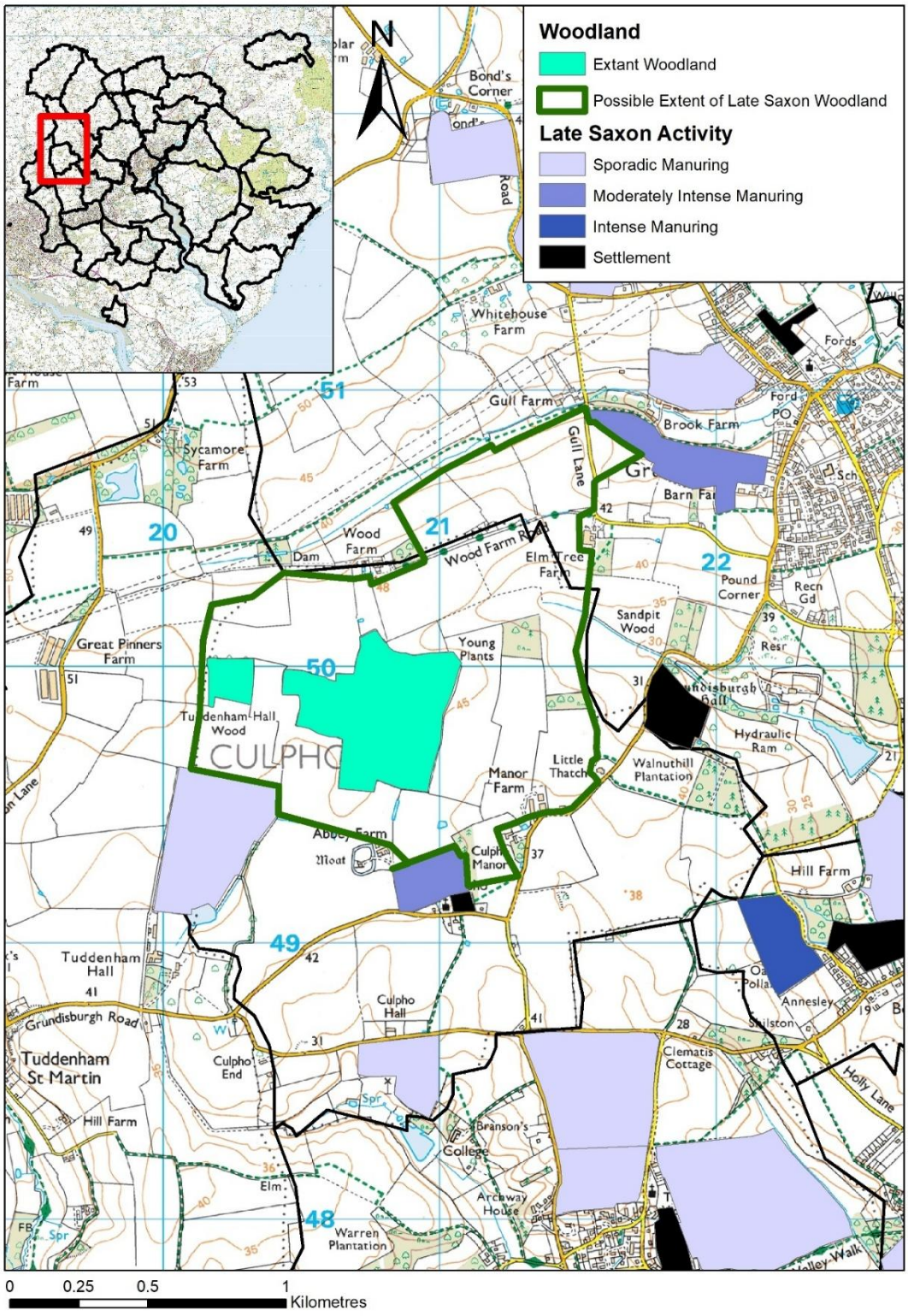

Figure 8.31: the possible Late Saxon extent of Culpho Wood compared to its present-day extent. It is possible that this area was woodland was once significantly larger, with the current area of woodland the result of subsequent periods of assarting. Source: DVSA 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 18, 22 and 34.

and yards during the colder months, the emergence of settlement on the margins of the waste suggests that this movement of cattle occurred daily, rather than seasonally. During the winter, as well as overnight in summer, these cattle remained in stalls and yards, fed on hay from increasingly intensively managed meadows, as well as leafy hay.[643] The waste from these cattle was assiduously collected and piled in yards where it was mixed with household waste. Such manure, when spread in the fields, resulted in substantial artefact scatters in the plough soil.

The Sandlings, by contrast, remained a landscape of sheep farming, with large flocks folded on arable fields after being grazed on the heaths during the day. Indeed, it can be suggested that the roots of sheep-corn husbandry, centred around the folding of large flocks of sheep in regulated courses on arable land, can be found in this period. While the folding of sheep on arable fields to restore fertility was prevalent in all periods, it is in the Late Saxon period that pervasive manorial control, characteristic of the sheep-corn husbandry systems of the Middle Ages, began to emerge; it is, therefore, in the centuries before the Norman conquest that the roots of the eventual flowering of sheep-corn husbandry can be found.[644] This direct manuring left little opportunity for household waste to become incorporated with the dung of livestock. While farmyard manure was certainly employed in order to restore fertility to these acidic soils, this was secondary to the direct manuring of the landscape by livestock.

Again, these variations in manuring strategies are further reinforced by the number of pottery sherds recovered from settlement sites in these subregions. Late Saxon clayland settlements are denoted by an average of 8 sherds per hectare, the result of household refuse being thoroughly removed from occupation sites and spread on the arable landscape. In the Sandlings, however, occupation sites are characterised, on average, by 75% more sherds, implying that household refuse was less conscientiously removed from farmsteads and yards in these areas as it formed a more minor component of contemporary manuring.

These environmentally structured variations in livestock husbandry also find expression in Domesday Book, both within the study area as well as within Suffolk more widely. The claylands of High Suffolk are dominated by large numbers of cattle (Figure 8.32); indeed, it is likely that the true number of cattle is understated by Domesday. Domesday Book only records demesne livestock; in areas characterised by weak manorial structures, small demesnes and many free

[643] Although no certain examples of Late Saxon cattle sheds have been identified, numerous excavated structures, such as that at Brandon interpreted by Carver as a stable, may also plausibly have been used for housing cattle. See Martin Carver, *Formative Britain: An Archaeology of Britain, Fifth to Eleventh Century AD* (Taylor & Francis, 2019), 242. Texts such as *Gerefa* do, however, imply the existence of stalls and byres to overwinter cattle.
[644] Belcher, *Foldcourse*, 9.

tenants, the number of animals may be underestimated.[645] The importance of woodland and leafy hay to the feeding of these cattle is also reflected in Domesday, attested by the association between vills with large areas of woodland and significant numbers of cattle, with, for example, the heavily wooded northeast of the county coterminous with many cattle recorded in the survey (Figure 8.33). Sheep, meanwhile, are most prominent in areas of acid sand, such as Breckland and the Sandlings, while large numbers are also recorded on the ridge of chalk in the southwest of the county (Figure 8.34). While small numbers of sheep are recorded in High Suffolk, these were relatively uncommon in this bosky landscape; as H.C. Darby noted, 'where there was most wood, there were fewest sheep'.[646] Although there are clear issues with interpreting the patterns of livestock husbandry recorded in Domesday Book, the varied livestock management systems, inherently intertwined with the local environment, find manifestation in documentary sources in the Late Saxon period for the first time.

[645] Barlow, 'Domesday Suffolk', 55.
[646] Darby, *Domesday Geography*, 182.

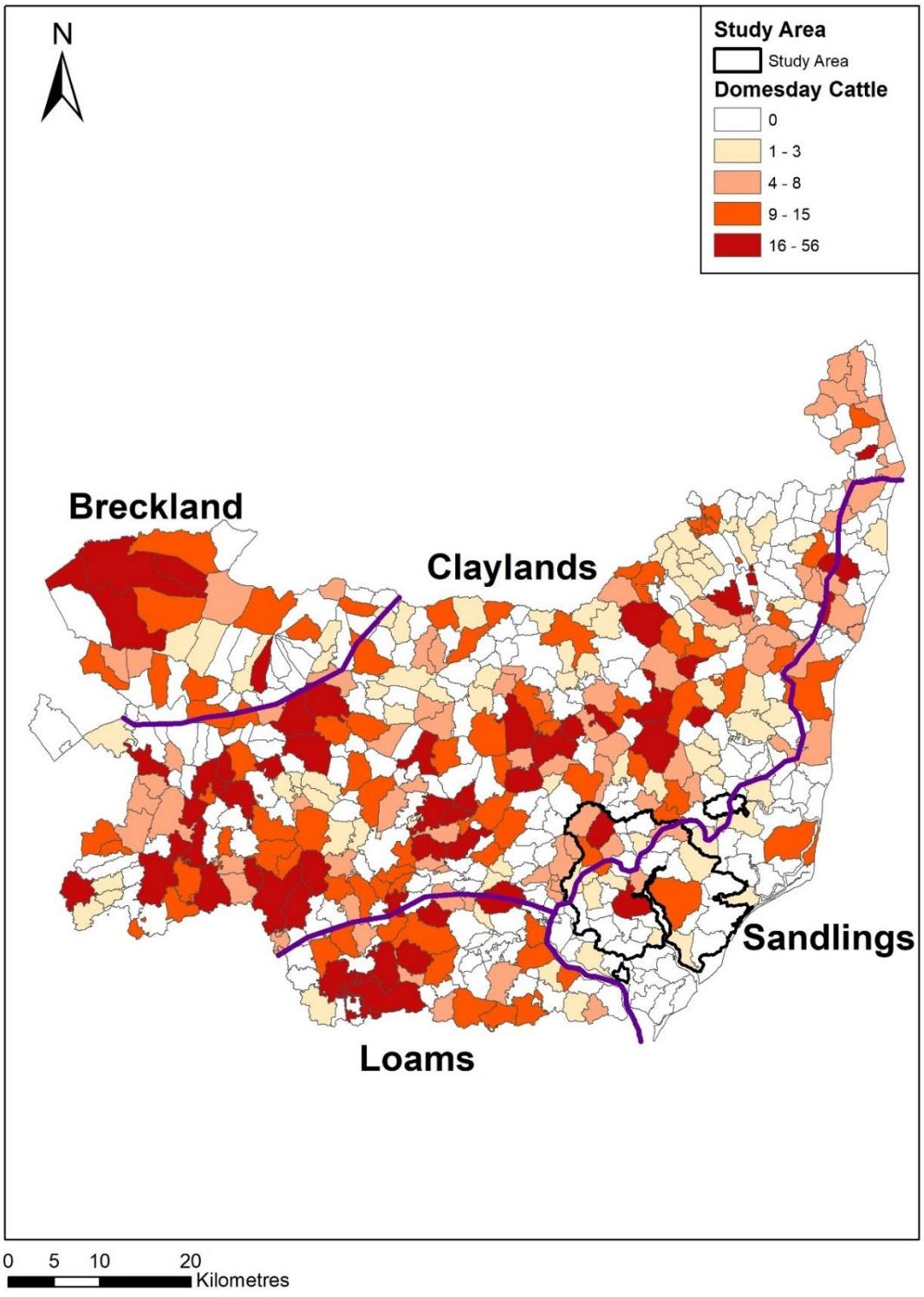

Figure 8.32: the distribution of cattle as recorded in Domesday Book, including those in shrunken and deserted vills where locatable (after Rumble, 1986). Cattle are clearly at their most prevalent in the claylands.

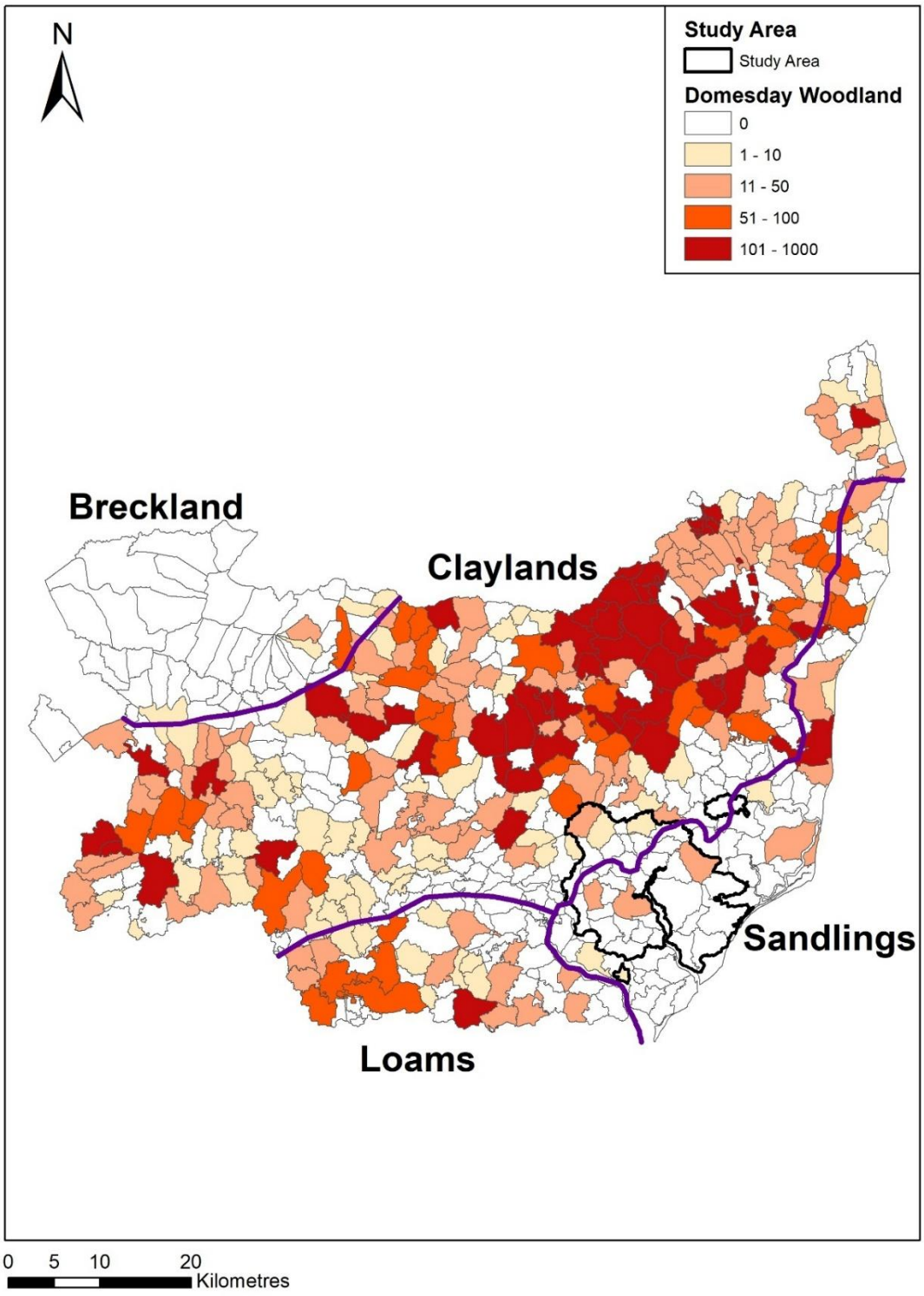

Figure 8.33: the distribution of woodland as recorded in Domesday Book, quantified by the number of swine each wood could support (after Rumble, 1986). Woodland is most prevalent in the claylands, precisely those areas in which cattle are also widespread.

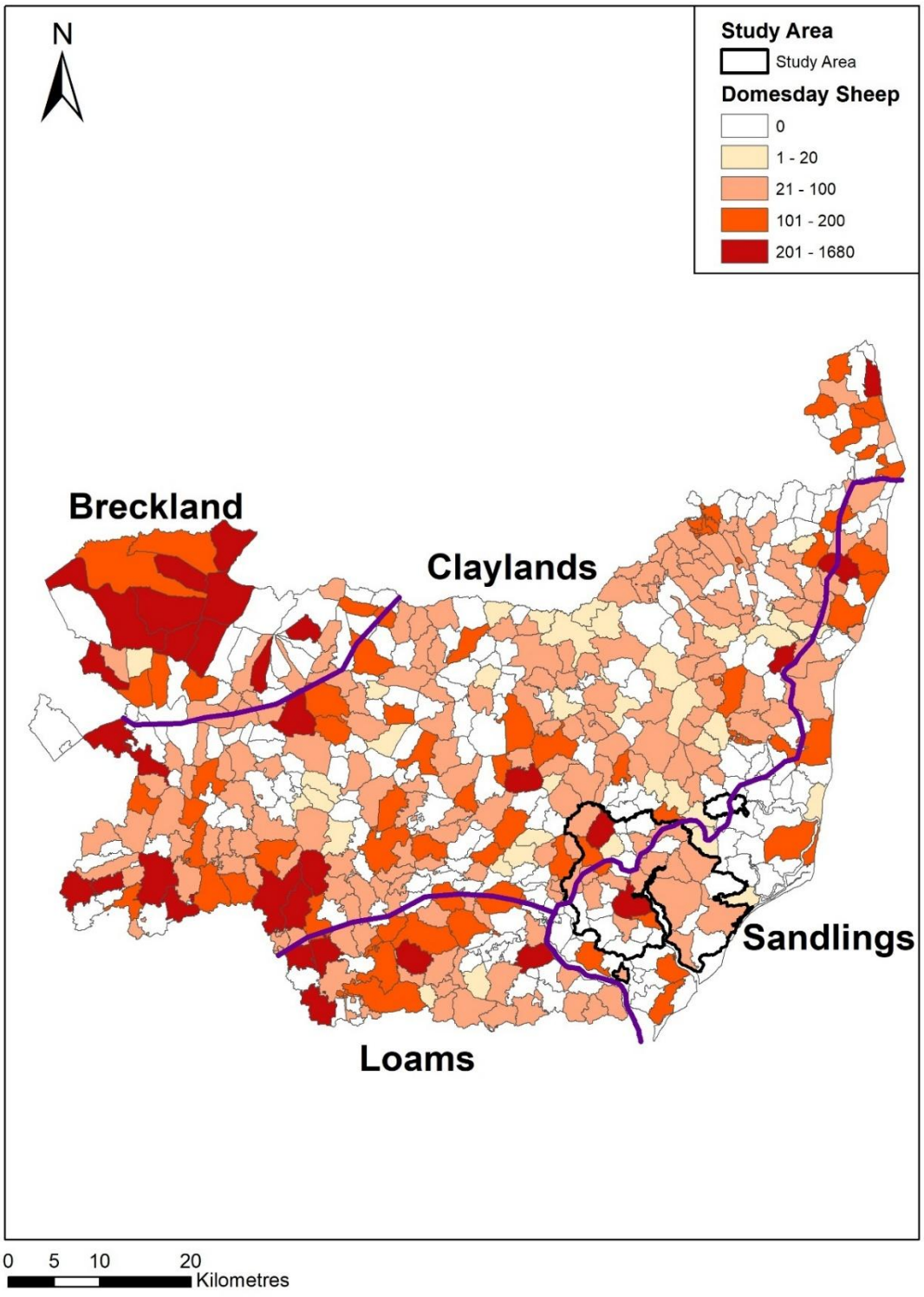

Figure 8.34: the distribution of sheep as recorded in Domesday Book, including those shrunken and deserted vills where locatable (after Rumble, 1986). Sheep are most prevalent in areas of sand or chalk soils, such as the Sandlings, Breckland and the East Anglian heights in the southeast of the country.

Conclusion

The countryside of Late Saxon East Suffolk was open, settled and exploited by an ever-growing population. Settlements were more numerous and, perhaps, larger than in previous periods, punctuating a landscape of arable fields, pasture, woodland and heath. These farmsteads mainly occupied valley side locations, exploiting the range of resources offered by such environmental contexts, although settlement and cultivation expanded onto the interfluves in a way somewhat reminiscent of the later Roman period.

The Late Saxon centuries have often been seen as a time of arable expansion, the period in which the livestock husbandry of previous centuries was subsumed by a rising tide of grain. This increase in the arable area was evidently a much longer process in East Suffolk, however, continuing into the High Middle Ages. Cultivation and cereal production certainly increased compared to the Middle Saxon period, but this had yet to reach the heights of the High Middle Ages. Such notions are demonstrated by the lack of association between the commons of post-medieval cartographic sources and Late Saxon settlements; with farmsteads remaining distant from the tattered remains of the waste, cultivation had not yet reached its fullest extent. While settlements clustered around the margins of the Late Saxon waste, subsequent assarting encroached upon these areas of grazing, creating commons and greens in their medieval and post-medieval form.

Although cereal production expanded in East Suffolk, livestock husbandry remained significant, not least in providing traction and manure for arable cultivation, as implied by the large areas given over to livestock farming. Vast expanses of the landscape were unploughed, carrying woodland, such as Culpho Wood and Lux Woods, as well as heathland, wood pasture and riverine grazing and meadows. Rather than unutilised wastes, these landscapes were central to the rural economy. Enduring variations in livestock husbandry, mediated by the environment, are again apparent in the Late Saxon countryside, patterns that are attested in Domesday Book. The claylands remained cattle country, while sheep farming was largely the preserve of the Sandlings; variations in the management of these beasts resulted in the differing manuring patterns evident in the ploughzone. These variations persisted through the turbulence of the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Chapter Nine: The High Medieval Landscape of East Suffolk, *c.* 1100-1350

Medieval Settlement Expansion

It is widely accepted that the High Middle Ages witnessed significant settlement expansion, coterminous with sizable demographic growth, until the early fourteenth century.[647] Indeed, as Bailey has noted, 'centuries of sustained population growth culminated at the beginning of the fourteenth century'.[648] Such an explosion in occupation is manifested in the study area, with 91 ceramically attested High Medieval settlements sites evident, representing a 727% increase in the scale of occupation compared to the Late Saxon period (Figure 9.1). The extent of this settlement clearly, for the first time, surpassed that of the later Roman period, with farmsteads strung throughout the landscape in the thirteenth century at a density almost three times that of the third and fourth centuries.

Indeed, it is likely, again, that this represents an underestimate of the true scale of occupation in the High Middle Ages. Many High Medieval sites remain occupied to the present day, suggesting that much settlement evidence may be masked by non-arable land use. Occupation on many of these sites is only attested by manuring scatters extending from the non-arable area, representing cultivation adjacent to the settlement, as at the moated sites of Grundisburgh Hall and Thistleton Hall (Figure 9.2). If these spreads of pottery extending from currently occupied settlements, as well as extensive metalwork scatters, are considered as evidence of occupation, it may plausibly be suggested that as many as 134 High Medieval settlements can be found in the study area, an increase of 197% compared to the Late Saxon period (Figure 9.3).[649]

These settlements were strung throughout the countryside at a density of 1.9 settlements per km^2;[650] indeed, if those sites marked only by metalwork or manuring scatters are considered, it is arguable that the settlement density of the study area may have reached

[647] Brian Roberts and Stuart Wrathmell, *Region and Place: A Study of English Rural Settlement* (English Heritage, 2002), 40–43.
[648] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 64.
[649] The Late Saxon figure used for comparison includes those settlements attested by spreads of metalwork, as well as manuring scatters extending from non-arable land use.
[650] Such settlement numbers appear low compared to other areas of East Anglia. Davison, for example, identified 56 individual High Medieval settlement sites in Hales, Loddon and Heckingham at a density of 2.76 settlements per km^2. Such patterns may, however, derive from disparities in site definition. See Davison, *South-East Norfolk*, 21–22.

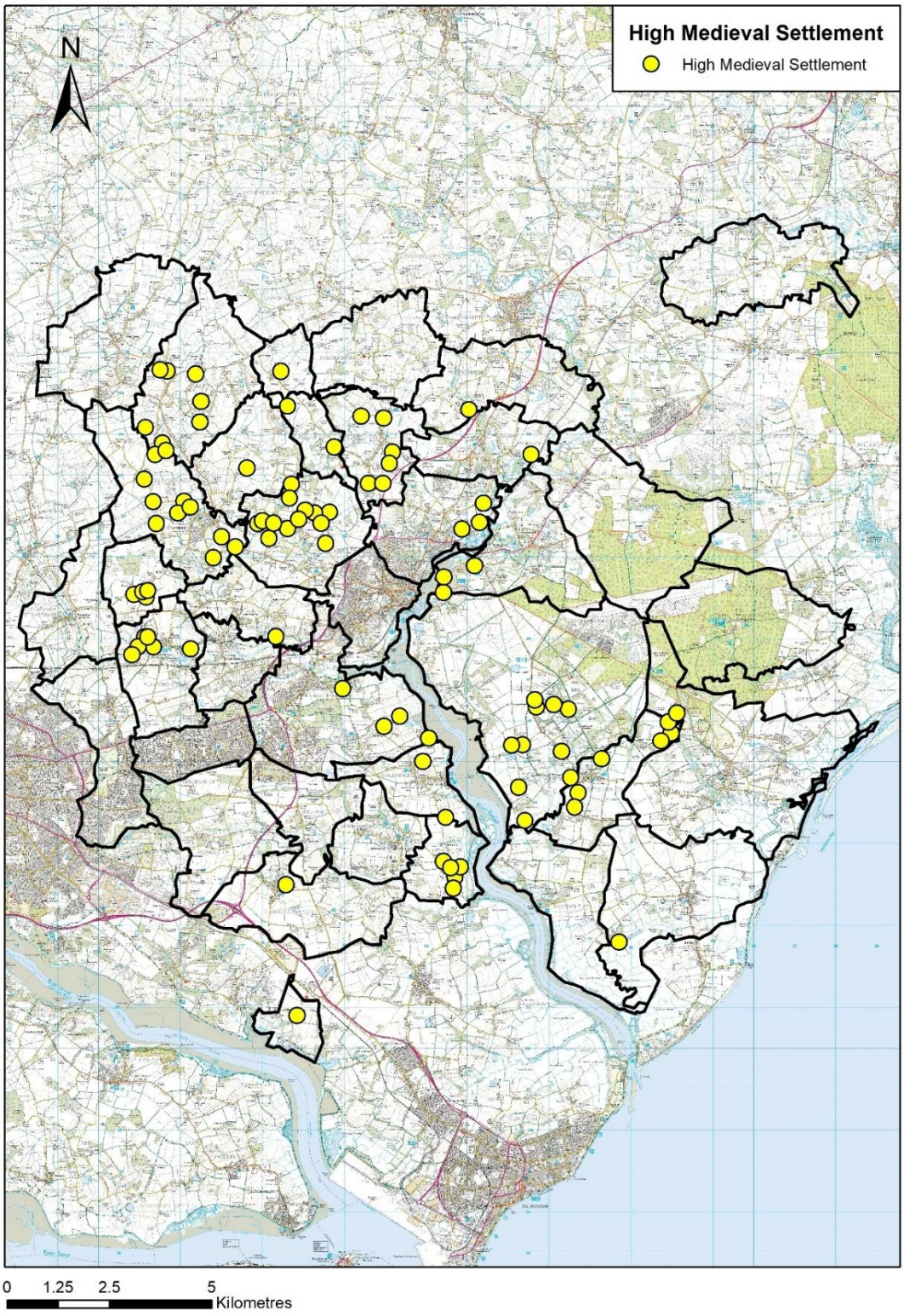

Figure 9.1: the distribution of archaeologically attested High Medieval settlements in the study area. Source: DVSA 1-37.

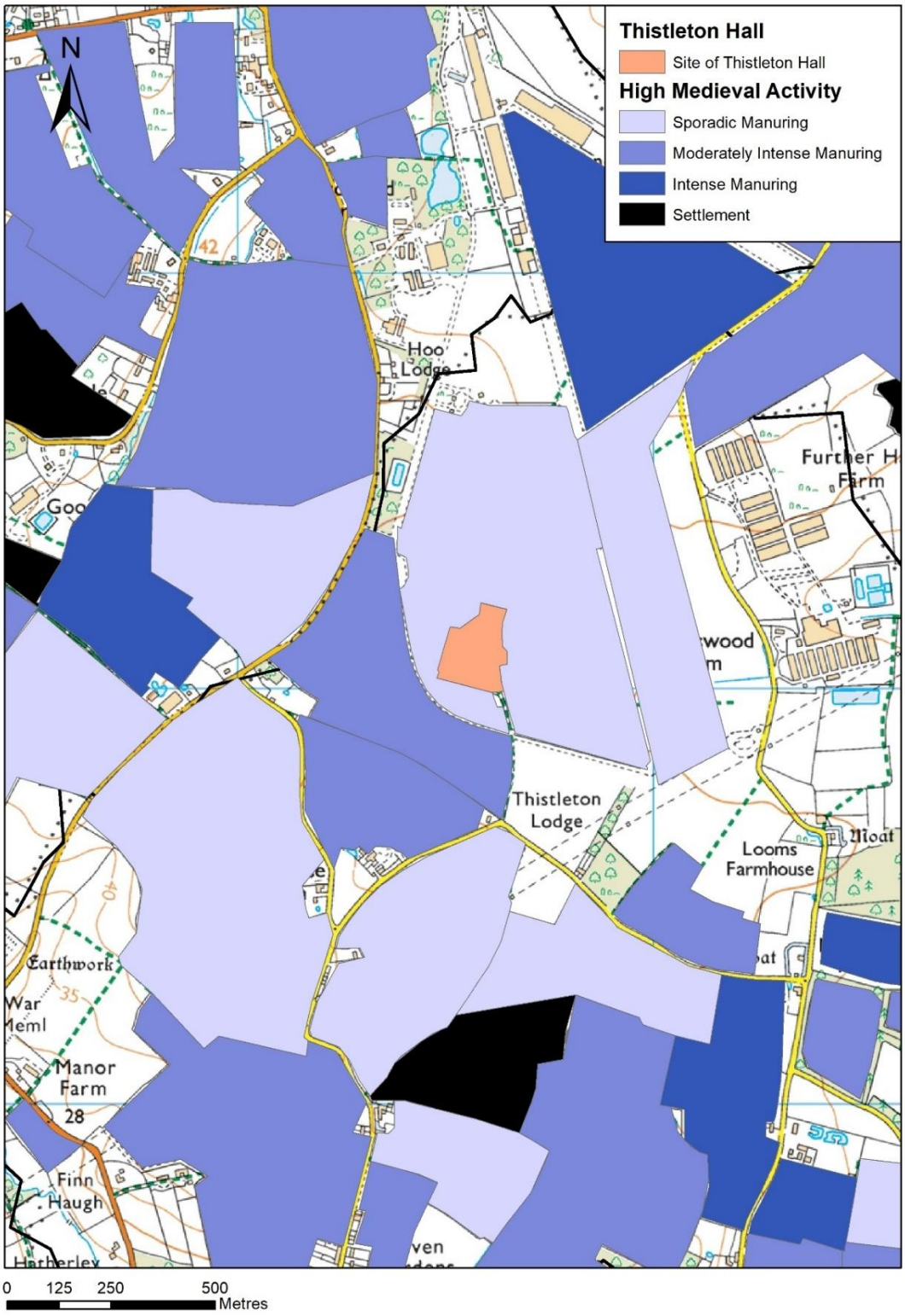

Figure 9.2: the distribution of High Medieval pottery in the area surrounding Thistleton Hall, the site of the deserted Domesday vill of Thistleton. Although occupied in the High Middle Ages, the evidence of this settlement is masked by non-arable land use, with activity only attested by manuring scatters extending from the non-arable area. Source: DVSA 8, 10, 11, 17, and 18).

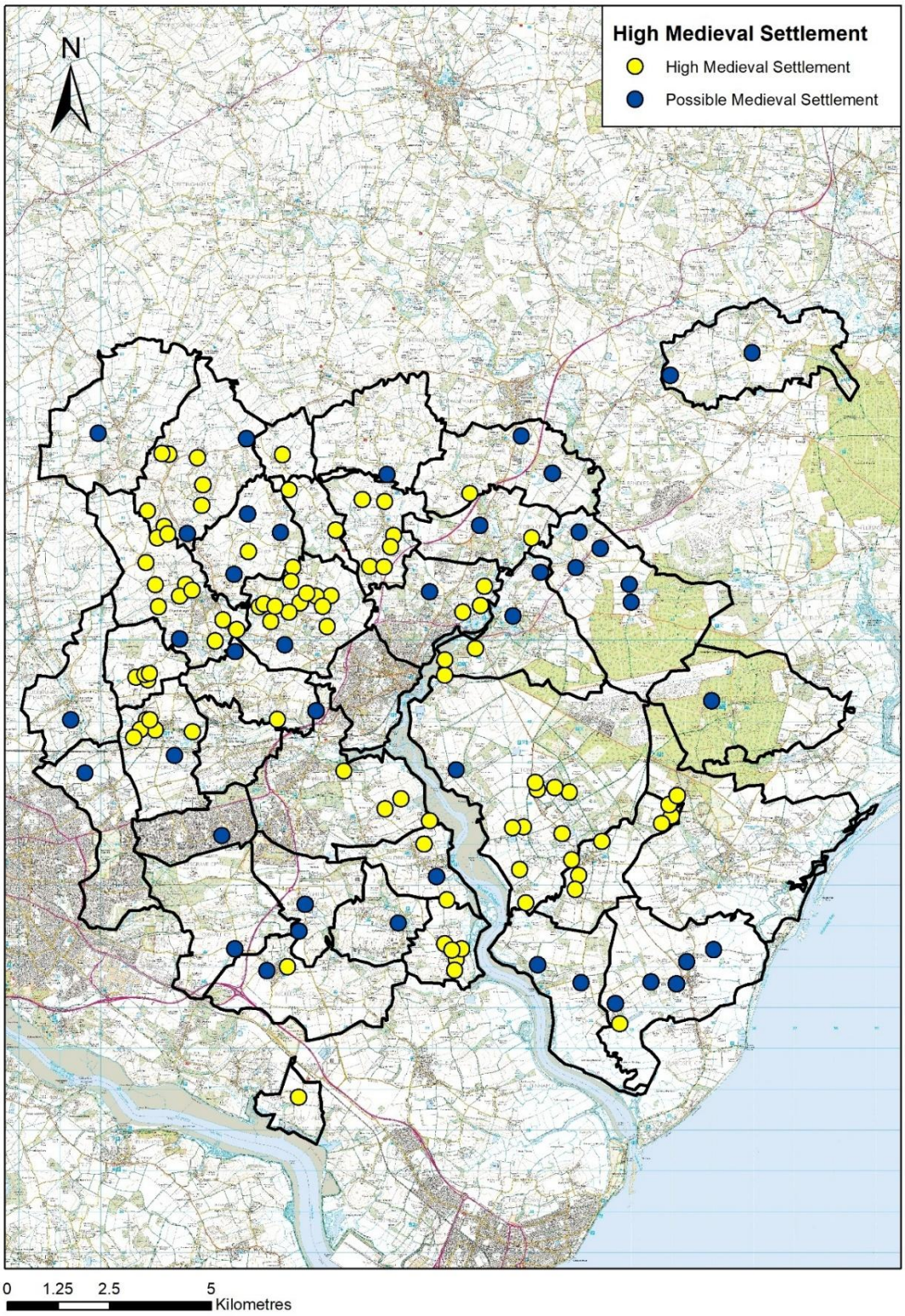

Figure 9.3: the distribution of archaeologically attested and possible medieval settlements in the study area. Source: DVSA 1-37 and PAS.

2.79 settlements per km^2 in the late thirteenth century. The High Medieval landscape of East Suffolk was clearly settled and exploited, a prosperous countryside in which numerous farmsteads punctuated an open and utilised landscape.

The Landscape Context of High Medieval Settlement

As in earlier periods, these settlements were often riverine, located both in the valleys of major rivers as well as more minor streams and tributaries, again the result of the wide range of environmental resources accessible from such locations (Figure 9.4). It is in these areas that well-drained, tractable soils could be found in the claylands, while the river valleys of the Sandlings were characterised by expanses of somewhat fertile Newport 2 soils. In the muted terrain of East Suffolk, the grazing resources of the uplands also lay in relatively close proximity to these riverine sites. Indeed, the importance of such locations, and the access to meadows they provided, may have increased during the High Middle Ages, particularly as the expansion of cultivation encroached upon the grazing resources of the interfluves (Figures 9.5 and 9.6). The twelfth and thirteenth centuries witnessed the continued proliferation of the mouldboard plough, requiring large teams of oxen; as such, the importance of riverine meadows, the exploitation of which is attested by spreads of metalwork recovered from the valley floor, may have grown, managed intensively to produce fodder. In order to exploit these meadows, settlements clustered at the margins of riverine grassland to facilitate their rapid and efficient management at key times of the year. That these areas of grassland could, after the hay harvest, be exploited as grazing which would continue to shoot even during the driest summers may have further increased their significance.

While settlement was overwhelmingly riverine in the Sandlings, farmsteads in the claylands occupied a more diverse range of environmental contexts. Although riverine settlement could be found in High Suffolk, particularly those wealthier sites attested by spreads of metalwork, farmsteads were flung widely throughout the countryside, including across the interfluves, huddled, in particular, around the margins of commons and greens.

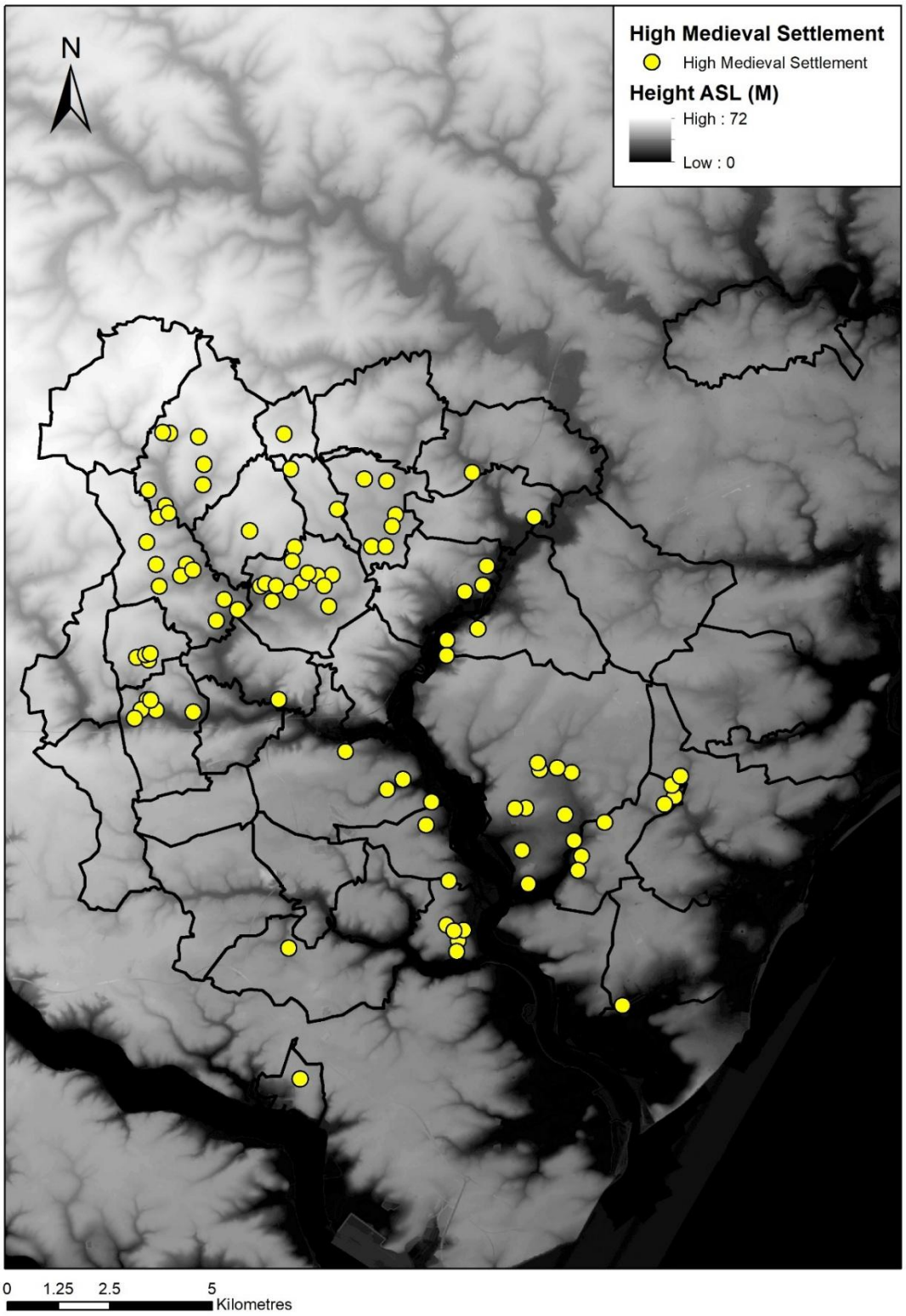

Figure 9.4: the distribution of High Medieval settlements in study area and its relationship with topography. It is clear that settlement occupied a more diverse range of environmental contexts in the claylands than in the Sandlings. Source: DVSA 1-37.

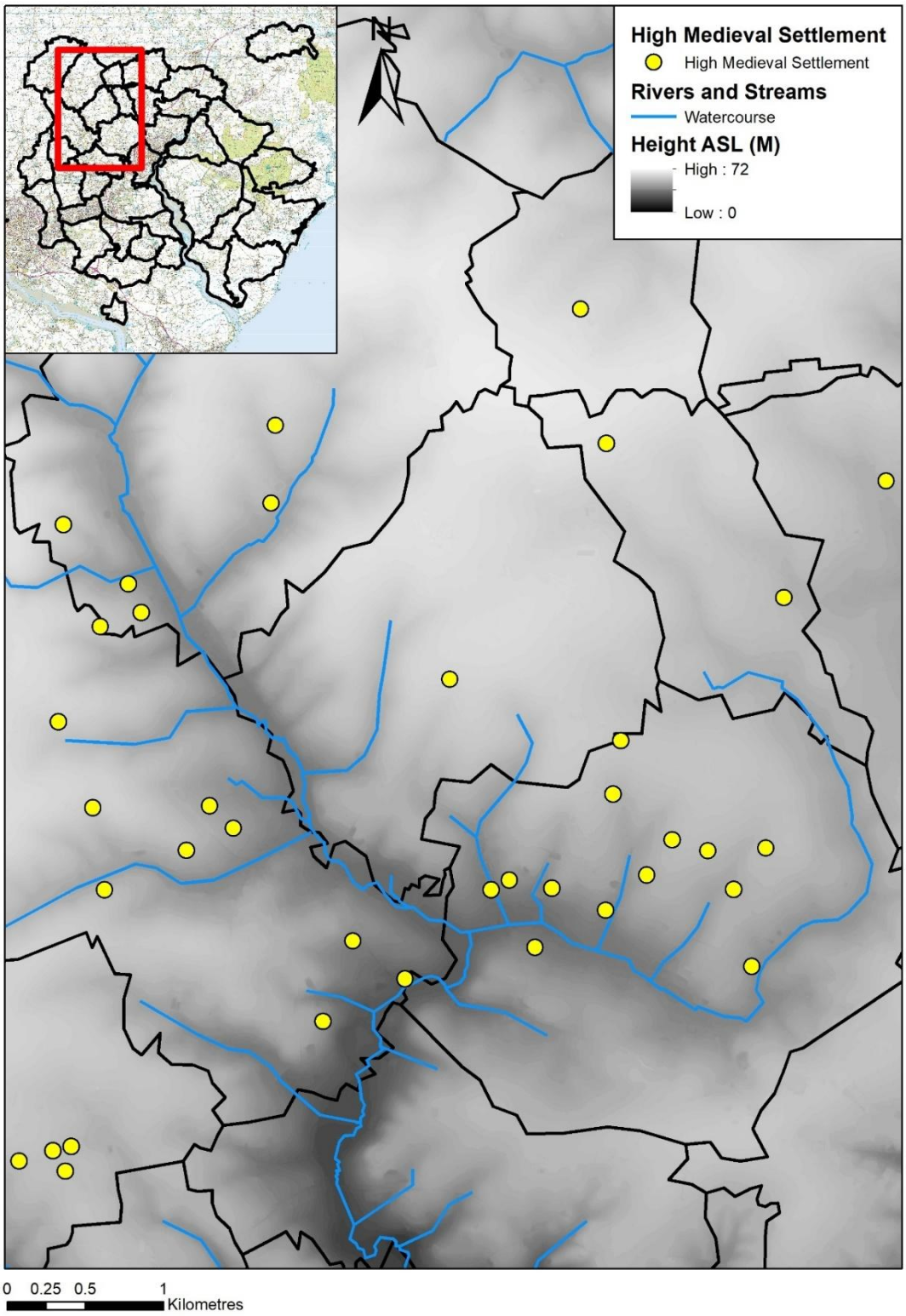

Figure 9.5: the distribution of medieval settlement in the north of the study area. Even minor streams and tributaries attracted sizeable concentrations of settlement. Only those watercourses marked on Ordnance Survey 1:25000 maps have been included. Source: DVSA 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 22, 28 and 34.

Figure 9.6: riverine grassland adjacent to the river Deben in Ufford. It was alongside these large areas of meadow that many High Medieval settlement sites could be found.

Subregional Variation in Settlement Form

While it has been suggested above that differing environmental contexts were occupied in the Sandlings and claylands, variations in settlement form are also apparent between these environmental subregions. In the claylands, few pottery scatters denoting settlement extend over adjacent fields, implying the presence of individual farmsteads or small hamlets spread throughout the countryside. In Hasketon, for example, settlement was widely dispersed, with six individual dense spreads of pottery covering only one or two fields apparent, representing small occupation sites, while nine individual spatially limited nodes of occupation were present in Grundisburgh (Figures 9.7, 9.8 and 9.9). In the Sandlings, meanwhile, pottery scatters are significantly larger, often spread across numerous adjacent fields, representing sprawling agglomerations of farmsteads. Settlement in the vill of Sutton, for example, took the form of a loose agglomeration of dwellings ranged alongside a small stream scattered across four fields, while the pottery scatter representing High Medieval occupation at the deserted Domesday vill of *Halgestou* is spread across four fields clustered around the head of the Black Ditch. Similarly, settlement in Hemley is marked by a dense pottery scatter some 1km in length, stretching across five fields, spread around the currently occupied settlement core. Such examples stand for a wider pattern; the settlements of the Sandlings were, unlike in the claylands, largely comprised of loosely nucleated, sprawling agglomerations of farmsteads, with the average Sandlings settlement pottery scatter covering some 9 hectares, 74% larger than in the claylands (Figures 9.10, 9.11 and 9.12).[651] It has been suggested that the settlement pattern of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in the Sandlings was comprised of 'loose scatters of single farms and cottages' strung around 'the margins of fens and heaths'; the evidence laid out above suggests that the High Medieval settlement pattern was somewhat more nucleated, although less tightly clustered than their Midlands counterparts.[652]

That the occupation sites of the Sandlings were comprised of a larger number of farmsteads than in the claylands is also attested by varied pottery scatter densities. Settlements in the Sandlings are consistently marked by denser scatters of pottery than their clayland counterparts, with the average settlement sherd density in the Sandlings 39% larger than in the claylands.

[651] As this is calculated for the whole field, variations in modern field size between each of these subregions may, to some degree, distort such patterns.
[652] Williamson, *Sandlands*, 76–77.

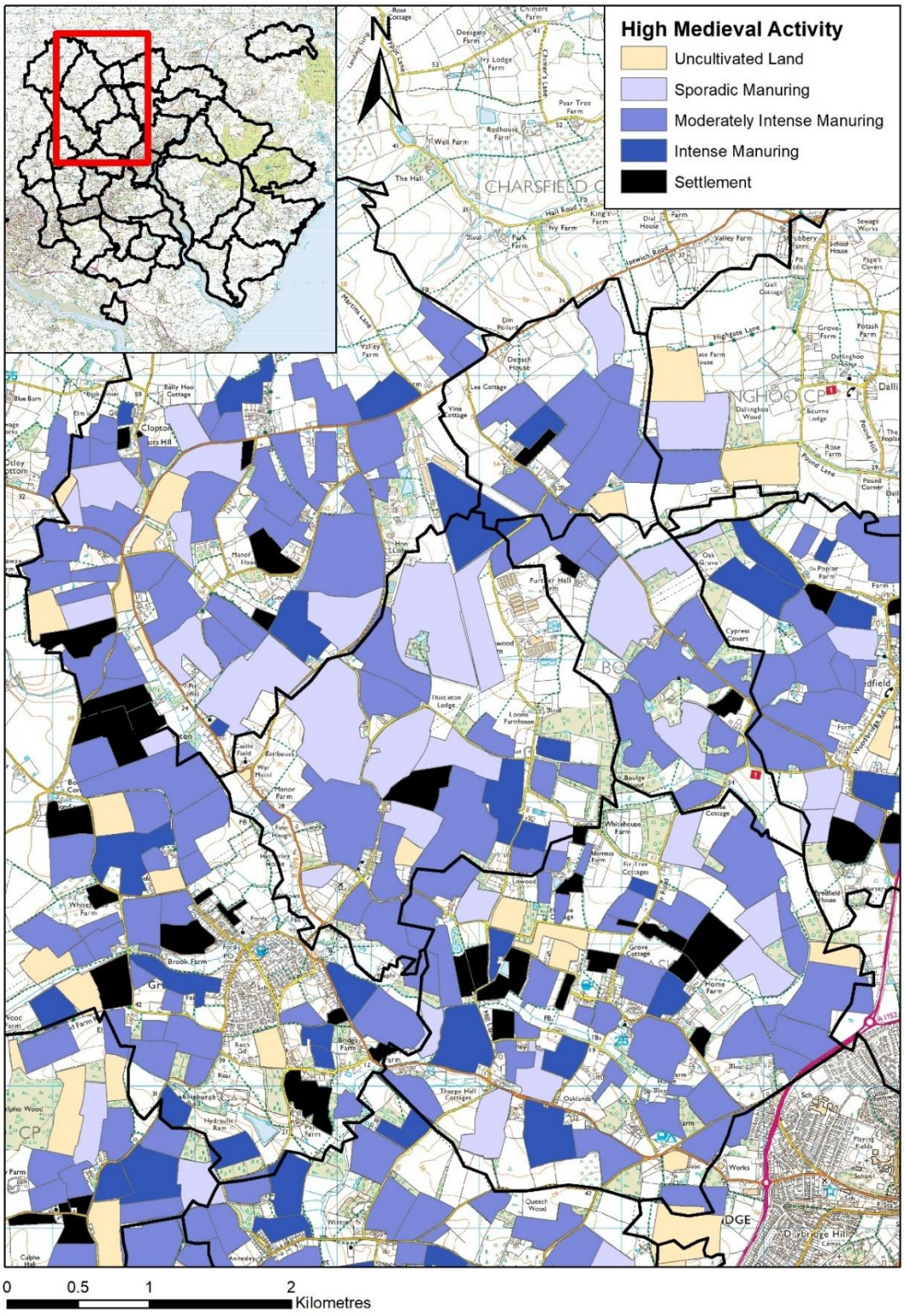

Figure 9.7: the distribution of High Medieval pottery scatters in Clopton, Burgh and surrounding parishes. Dense scatters of pottery representing settlement are much more spatially limited in the claylands, reflecting a landscape of dispersed farmsteads and small hamlets. Source: DVSA 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 22, 28 and 34, 35 and 37.

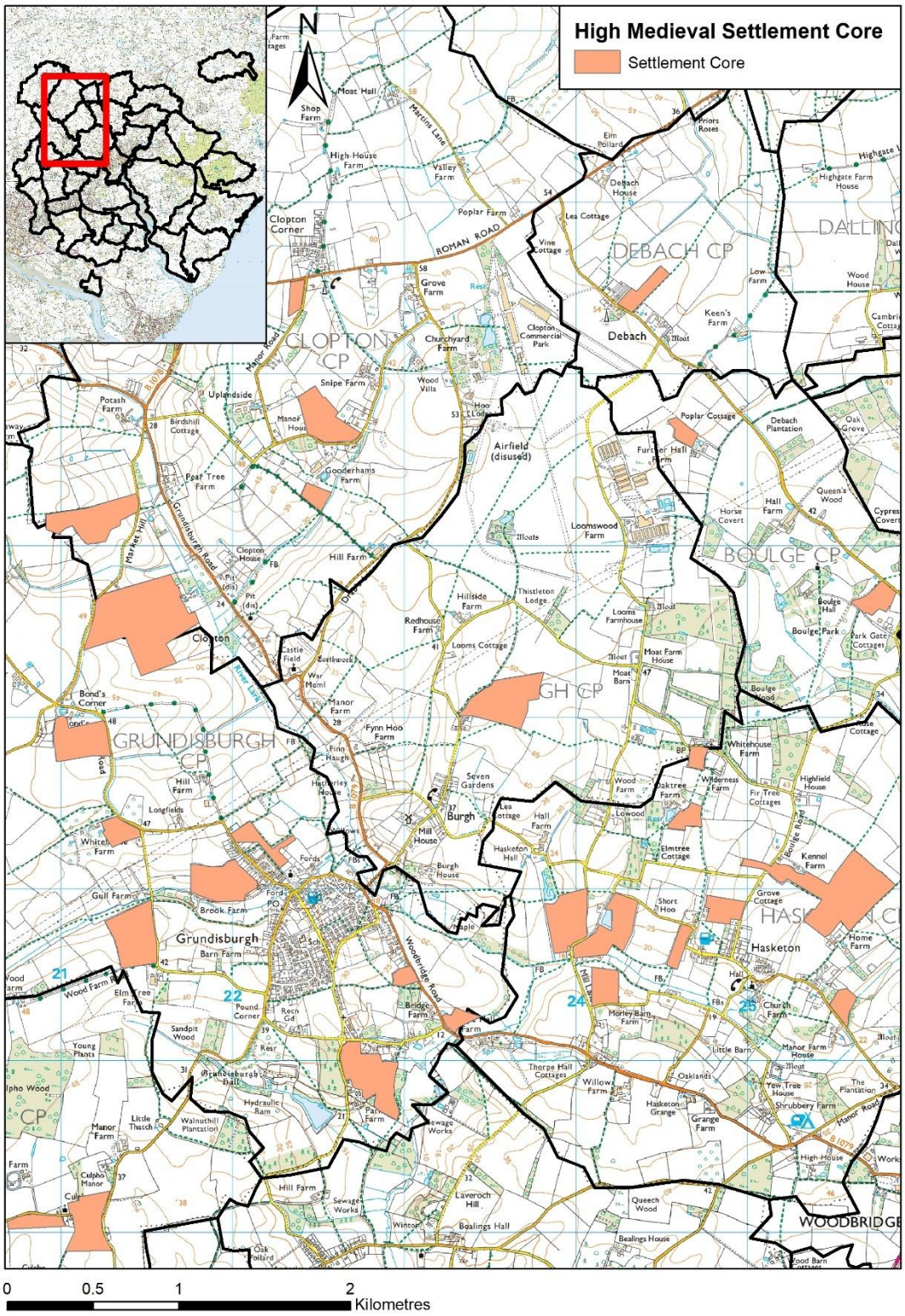

Figure 9.8: the High Medieval settlement cores of the claylands around Grundisburgh, Burgh and Hasketon, as attested by pottery scatters. It is clear that clayland settlement took the form of numerous discrete occupation sites scattered widely throughout the countryside. Source: DVSA 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 22, 28 and 34, 35 and 37.

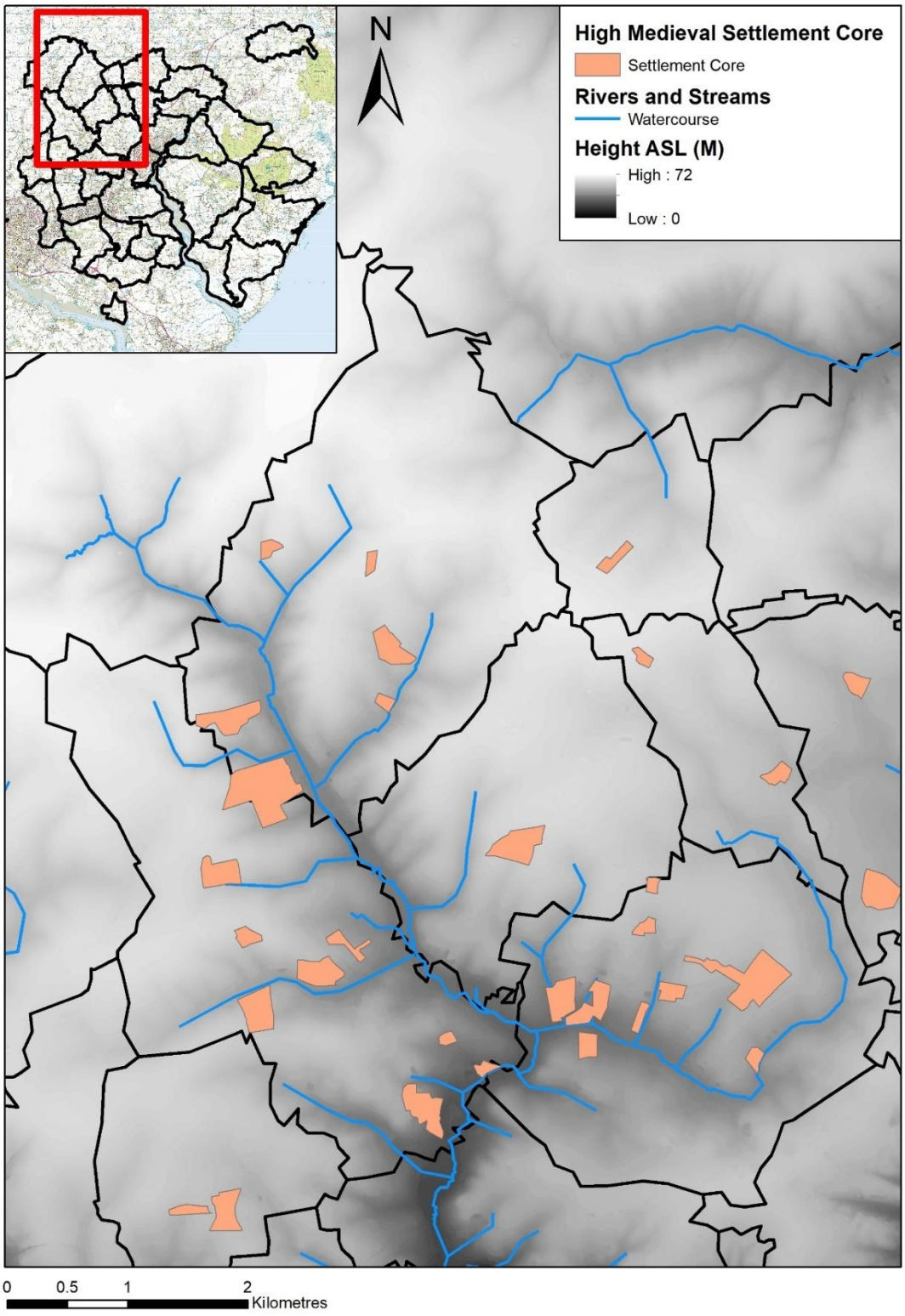

Figure 9.9: the distribution of High Medieval settlements in the north of the study area and its relationship with topography. Even when clayland settlements extending across adjacent fields are considered as a single settlement, it is apparent that High Suffolk was a landscape of numerous, small areas of occupation scattered throughout the countryside. Source: DVSA 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 22, 26, 28 and 37.

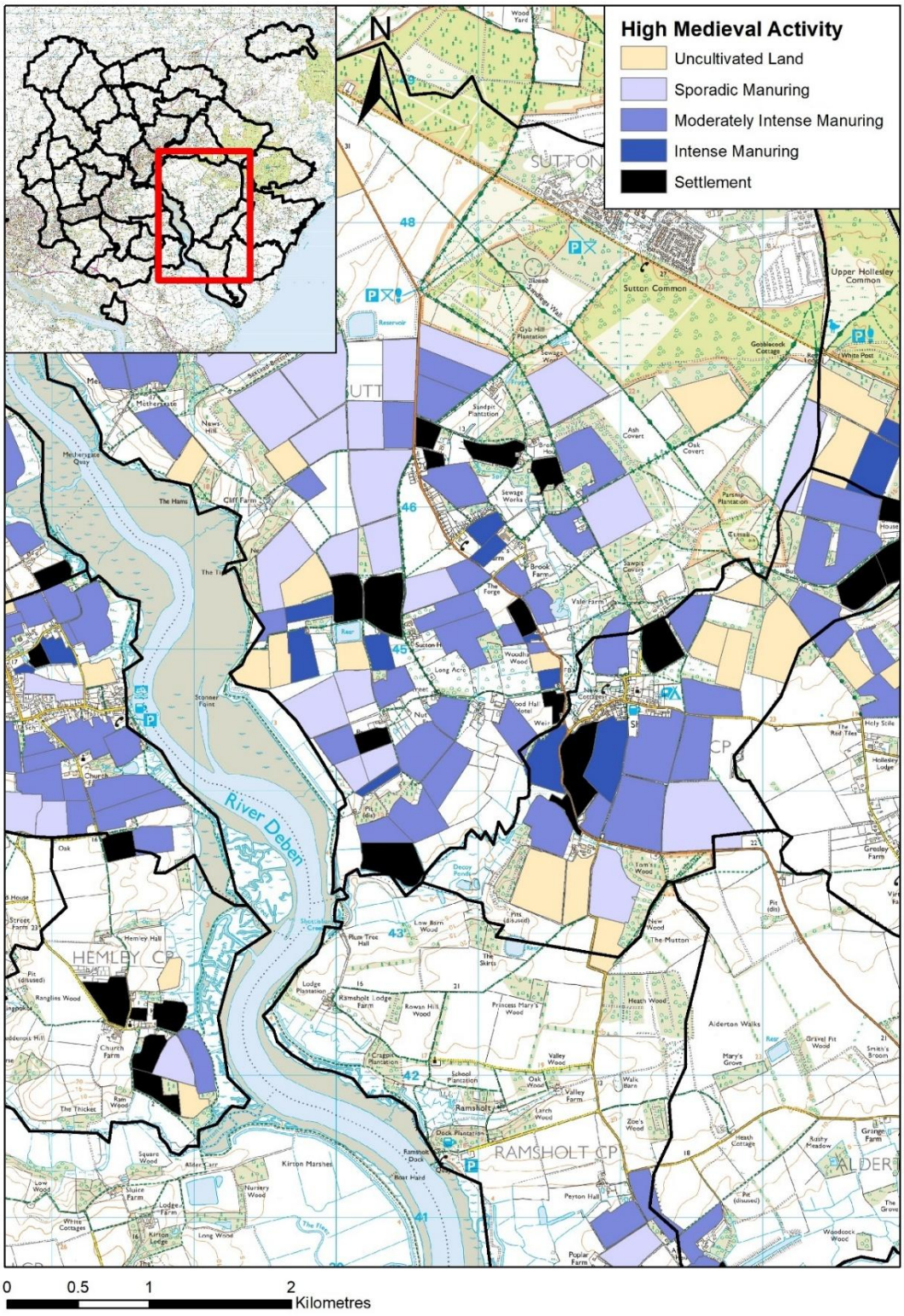

Figure 9.10: the distribution of High Medieval pottery in Sutton and surrounding parishes. Dense pottery scatters denoting settlement often extend across many fields, representing loose agglomerations of farmsteads. Source: DVSA 6, 7, 14, 19, 20, 23, 29, 31, 33, 36 and 37.

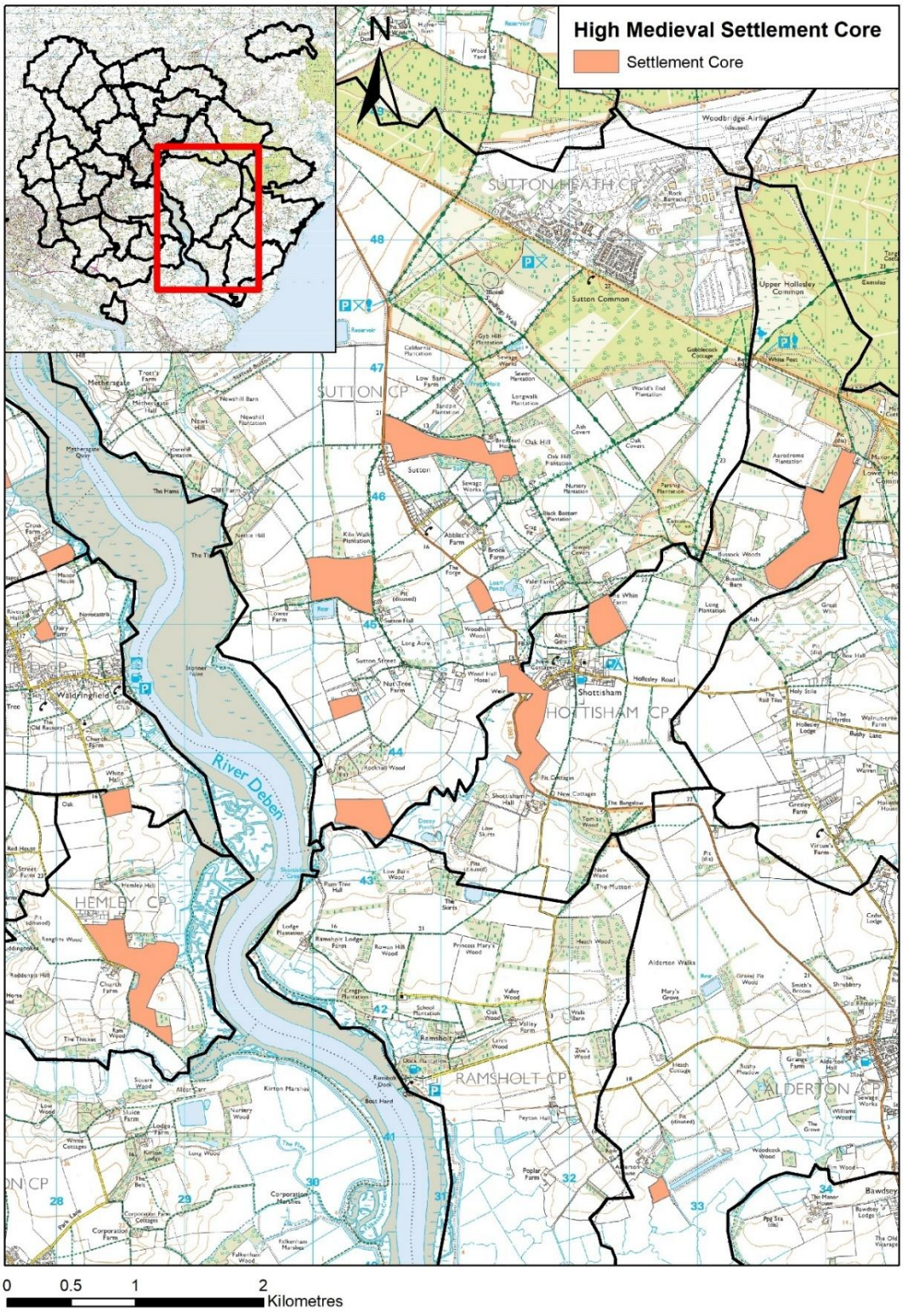

Figure 9.11: High Medieval settlement cores in Sutton and surrounding areas. It is clear that settlement in the Sandlings took on a much more nucleated form than in the claylands. The elongated form of some of these settlement cores is somewhat akin to some polyfocal villages in the English Midlands. Source: DVSA 6, 7, 14, 19, 20, 23, 29, 31, 33, 36 and 37.

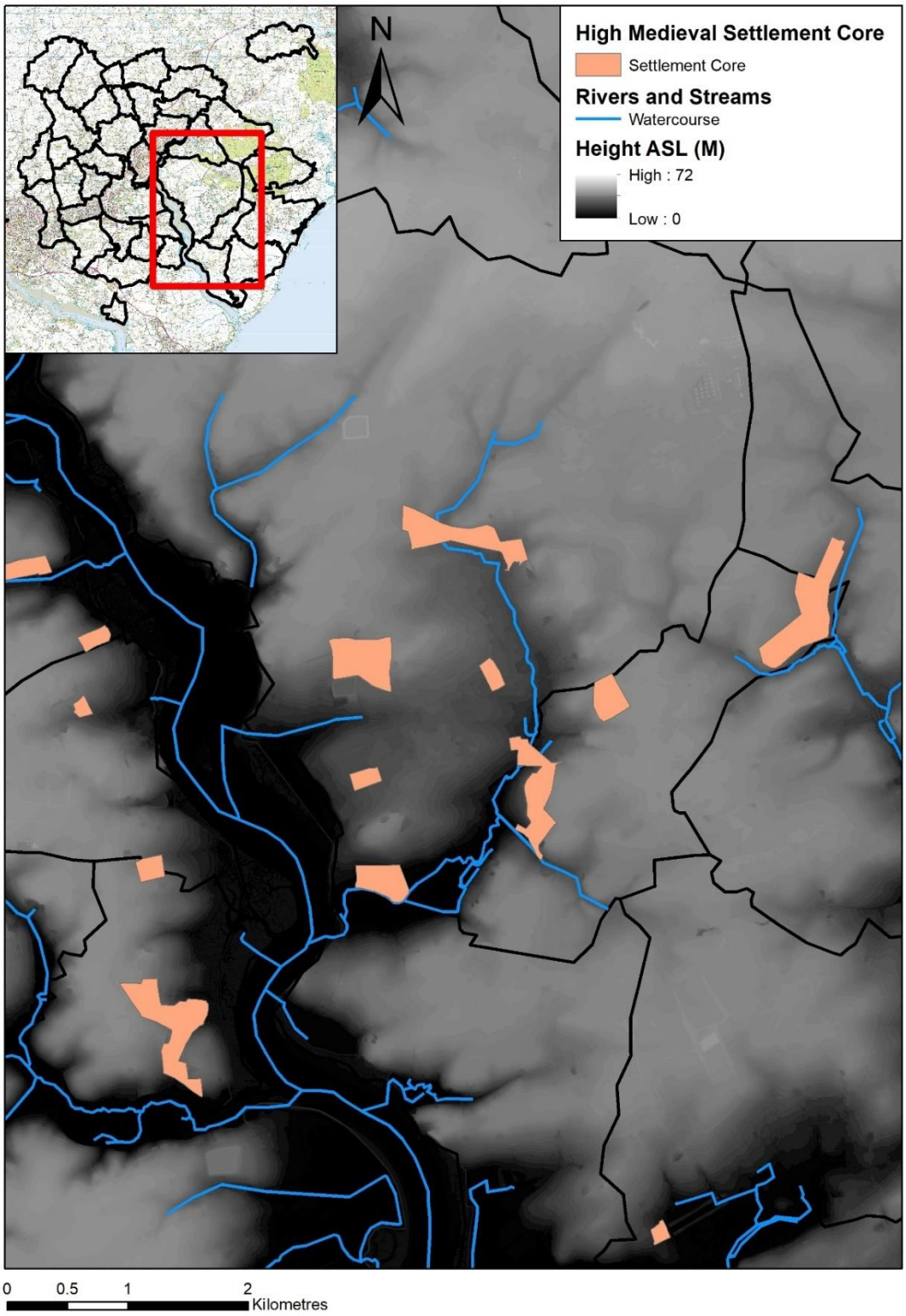

Figure 9.12: the distribution of High Medieval settlement cores in the Sandlings and their relationship with topography. It is evident that these sprawling agglomerations of farmsteads huddled around rivers, streams and springs from which reliable supplies could be drawn. Source: DVSA 6, 7, 14, 19, 20, 23, 29, 31, 33, 36 and 37.

While this may, to some degree, be a result of the reliance on household manure to restore fertility to the arable landscape in the claylands, and thus, midden material was more thoroughly removed from settlement sites in High Suffolk, such patterns plausibly reflect the nucleated settlement forms of the Sandlings, with relatively large numbers of farmsteads loosely melded together.

Subregional Variation in Settlement Density

It has long been suggested that the scale of occupation, as well as population, was greater in the East Anglian claylands than areas of acid sand such as Breckland and the Sandlings.[653] Indeed, mapping of the 1327 Lay Subsidy Returns seemingly corroborates such notions, suggesting that 'the light soils of … the Sandlings in the south-east shared sparser tax-paying populations … than the more fertile wood-pasture region of central or High Suffolk'.[654] Yet, it appears that, in the study area at least, the Sandlings were more densely occupied, with settlement densities of 2.06 settlements per km^2 apparent in areas of acid sand, compared to 1.65 per km^2 in High Suffolk.

Such a pattern is superficially perplexing. This may, however, imply limitations in the interpretation of population densities from contemporary tax records. As will be discussed below, the High Medieval Sandlings was characterised by a highly stratified society, with small numbers of wealthy landowners punctuating a landscape of relatively impoverished peasants; that the Lay Subsidy Rolls only record those who owned over five shillings of moveable goods may suggest that a number of these Sandlings peasants went unrecorded in contemporary tax accounts.

These disparities in settlement density may, however, also derive from the varied settlement forms laid out above and the methodological issues these present. The Sandlings was characterised by loose, sprawling agglomerations of farmsteads, attested by pottery scatters spread across numerous adjacent fields. Although representing a single agglomeration of settlement, these spreads of pottery have, using the present methodology, been counted as distinct settlement sites. The single nucleation of farmsteads scattered across adjacent fields in Hemley has, for example, been considered as five individual settlements; such notions suggest that the extent of occupation in the Sandlings may have been overstated.

These issues can be countered, however, by considering settlements scattered across adjacent fields as a single site. In this light, the settlement density of High Suffolk appears greater than

[653] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 68.
[654] Dymond and Todd, 'Population Densities', 80.

the Sandlings. The claylands were characterised by numerous individual occupation sites and small agglomerations of settlement widely scattered throughout the countryside. In the Sandlings, meanwhile, although the density of occupation *within* discrete nucleations of farmsteads was greater than in High Suffolk, that is, these agglomerations of settlement were larger than their clayland counterparts, there were fewer of these sites spread more thinly throughout the countryside at a density of 1.2 settlements per km^2. Such patterns corroborate, therefore, that the Suffolk claylands were 'some of the most densely populated areas of England'.[655]

The Recolonisation of the Claylands

It has been highlighted above that the landscape of High Suffolk was open and exploited, occupied by a sizeable population. Although it has been suggested that this 'recolonisation of the claylands', including those areas of level, intractable clay on the interfluves, had taken place by the eleventh century, the expansion of settlement in High Suffolk occurred over a much longer period, only fully manifested in the High Middle Ages.[656] While evidence of Late Saxon clayland occupation, both in the river valleys as well as on the interfluves, has been laid out above, the High Middle Ages witnessed a significant expansion of settlement in High Suffolk, with 46 occupation sites evident, an increase of over 1400% (Figure 9.13).[657] While the imprecise dating of pottery scatters has previously prevented closer interrogation of the chronology of this expansion of activity, scatters of metalwork from the interfluves, including those from Otley and Pettistree, suggest that the settlement and exploitation of those most marginal areas of clay soil was not fully manifested until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It has been argued above that the extent of clayland settlement and cultivation may be used as a proxy for the adoption and proliferation of heavy ploughing technology. That the claylands, particularly the interfluves, were not fully opened up for settlement and cultivation until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries implies that the wider adoption of the mouldboard plough may have only reached its maximum extent in the High Middle Ages, perhaps through the collaboration of groups of farmers.

While the High Middle Ages represents the first period in which the claylands were more intensively occupied than the neighbouring Sandlings, it is important to avoid understating the

[655] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 67. Similar patterns are suggested by Domesday Book. See Darby, *Domesday Geography*, 172.
[656] Warner, *Clayland Colonization*, 13–18.
[657] When those possible settlement sites in both periods are considered, it is arguable that the expansion of occupation may have been more limited, by some 385%.

extent to which areas of acid sand were exploited. While the infertility of the soil precluded the production of cereal crops at yields akin to those of the claylands,[658] large areas of the landscape were under the plough, manured by extensive flocks of sheep in 'sheep-corn husbandry' systems.[659] Although perhaps less prosperous than the claylands, the Sandlings was not an impoverished countryside, as attested by the investment in churches such as at Bawdsey and Hollesley. If the church is indeed the barometer of the community, then the continued investment in ecclesiastical provision in the Sandlings implies significant levels of wealth in the area.

'Common Edge Drift'

This expansion of clayland occupation is intertwined with the development of common edge settlement forms. It has been demonstrated in Chapter Eight that the Late Saxon settlements of the study area remained distant from commons as recorded on eighteenth-and-nineteenth-century cartographic sources. This does not, however, preclude these Late Saxon sites from themselves being 'common edge settlements', huddled around common grazing resources. Rather, these sites may have been located on the margins of the Late Saxon waste, with subsequent encroachment severing the association between these farmsteads and adjacent grazing resources. While Late Saxon farmsteads were distant from the margins of the post-medieval waste, numerous High Medieval settlement sites were clustered around post-medieval commons and greens. Two discrete areas of occupation are apparent around the margins of Clopton Green, for example, while settlement was also located on the edges of common grazing in Grundisburgh and Bredfield (Figure 9.14). Indeed, coarseware scatters adjacent to currently occupied greenside farmsteads, such as in Burgh, suggest the presence of further High Medieval settlement sites situated around grazing resources, the remains of which are largely obscured by non-arable land use. Such evidence clearly implies that the form of these commons and greens, as well as the spreads of settlement around their margins, was the product of the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

[658] Bruce M. S. Campbell and Mark Overton, 'A New Perspective on Medieval and Early Modern Agriculture: Six Centuries of Norfolk Farming c.1250-c.1850', *Past & Present* 141 (1993): 141.
[659] For further analysis of sheep-corn husbandry, see Belcher, *Foldcourse*.

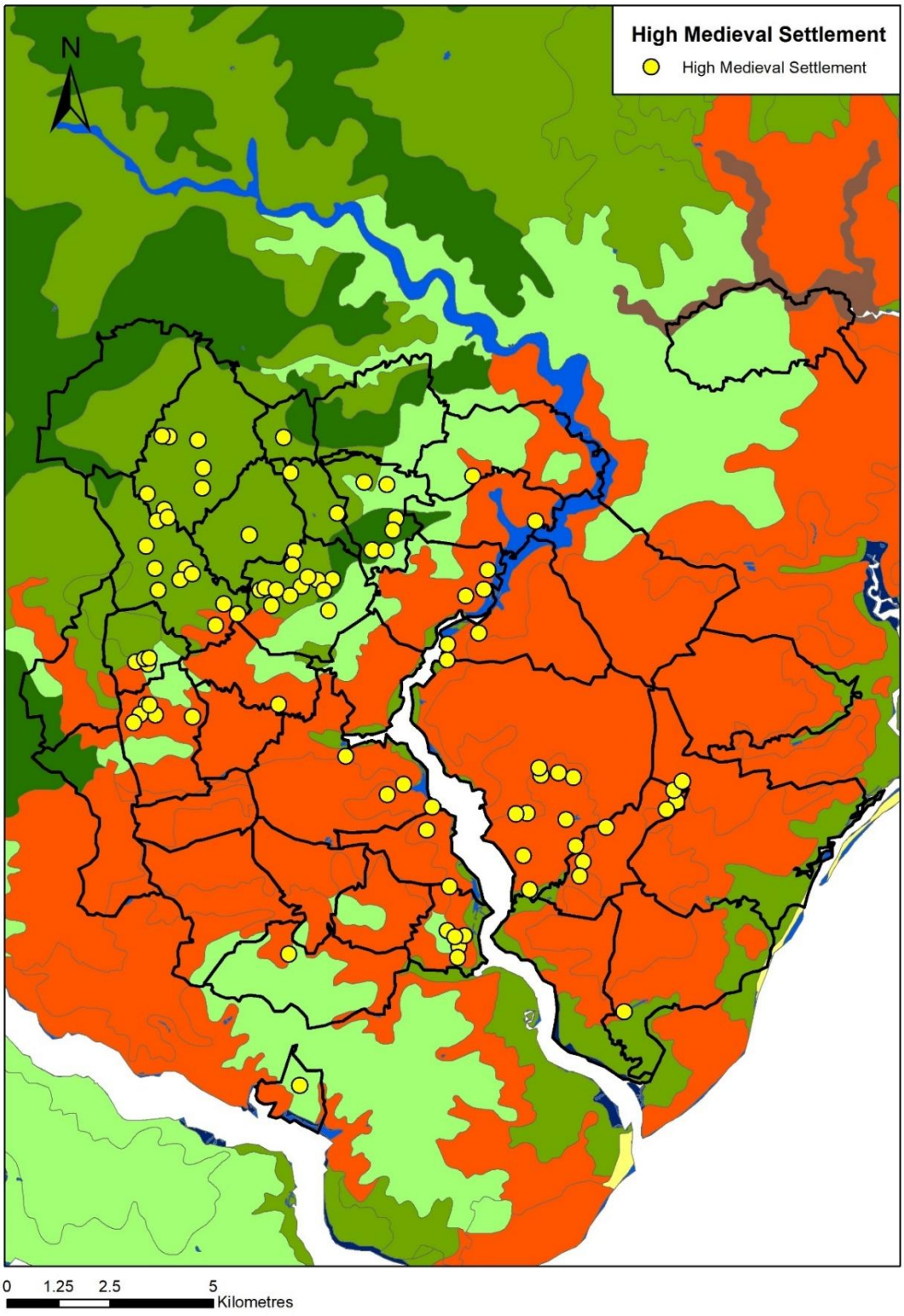

Figure 9.13: the distribution of settlement in the study area and its relationship with the soils of the region. The occupation of High Suffolk, including those level areas of clay on the interfluves, was fully manifested in this period. Source: DVSA 1-37.

While the imprecise dating of ceramic sequences in East Suffolk precludes further interrogation of the chronological development of common edge settlement, scatters of metalwork from the study area, although relatively limited in number, offer the opportunity to closely date the emergence of greenside farmsteads. Spreads of metalwork from the margins of greens such as in Clopton and Otley suggest that the recognisable common edge settlement pattern of East Suffolk began to emerge in the twelfth century, while farmsteads continued to spread around common grazing in the first half of the thirteenth century in Dallinghoo and Blaxhall. Significantly, the establishment of new settlements around common grazing appears to have ceased in the second half of the thirteenth century, with the latest site, that in Blaxhall, likely fixed in the landscape before the turn of the fourteenth.[660] While the limited quantities of metalwork recovered from the margins of commons and greens suggests that such notions should not be overextended, it is arguable that the formation of greenside settlements had, in the study area at least, largely ceased by the later thirteenth century, although those settlements fixed in the landscape by this date remained occupied.

Again, this chronology is divergent from that posited in other areas of East Anglia, such as South Norfolk, where it is suggested that greenside settlement emerged in the Late Saxon period, although expansion continued into the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[661] Such notions are, however, based upon poorly dated scatters of pottery; the total lack of integration of metalwork into studies of 'common edge drift' limits opportunities to precisely interrogate the development of this settlement form elsewhere in East Anglia.[662] The factors underpinning these divergent chronologies remain unclear. At a basic level, it is plausible that greenside settlement forms emerged in areas of Norfolk earlier than in East Suffolk owing to the varied pace of assarting, with cultivation expanding more rapidly in areas characterised by early 'common edge drift'. The limited disparity in Domesday plough teams and population between these areas suggests, however, that other factors may have stimulated this varying pace of 'common edge drift';[663] such variation may, for example, derive from differing topography between these regions, although further work is required to clarify such notions.

[660] Such notions are based upon metal artefacts recovered from the margins commons such as PAS SF-995D33.
[661] Davison, *South-East Norfolk*, 16–22.
[662] Wegman, for example, makes no attempt to use metalwork dating evidence in Imogen Wegman, 'The Causes of Common-Edge Drift: A Norfolk Study', *Norfolk Archaeology* 47 (2016): 356–73.
[663] Compare figures 25, 26, 27 and 28 with 41, 42, 43 and 44 in Darby, *Domesday Geography*.

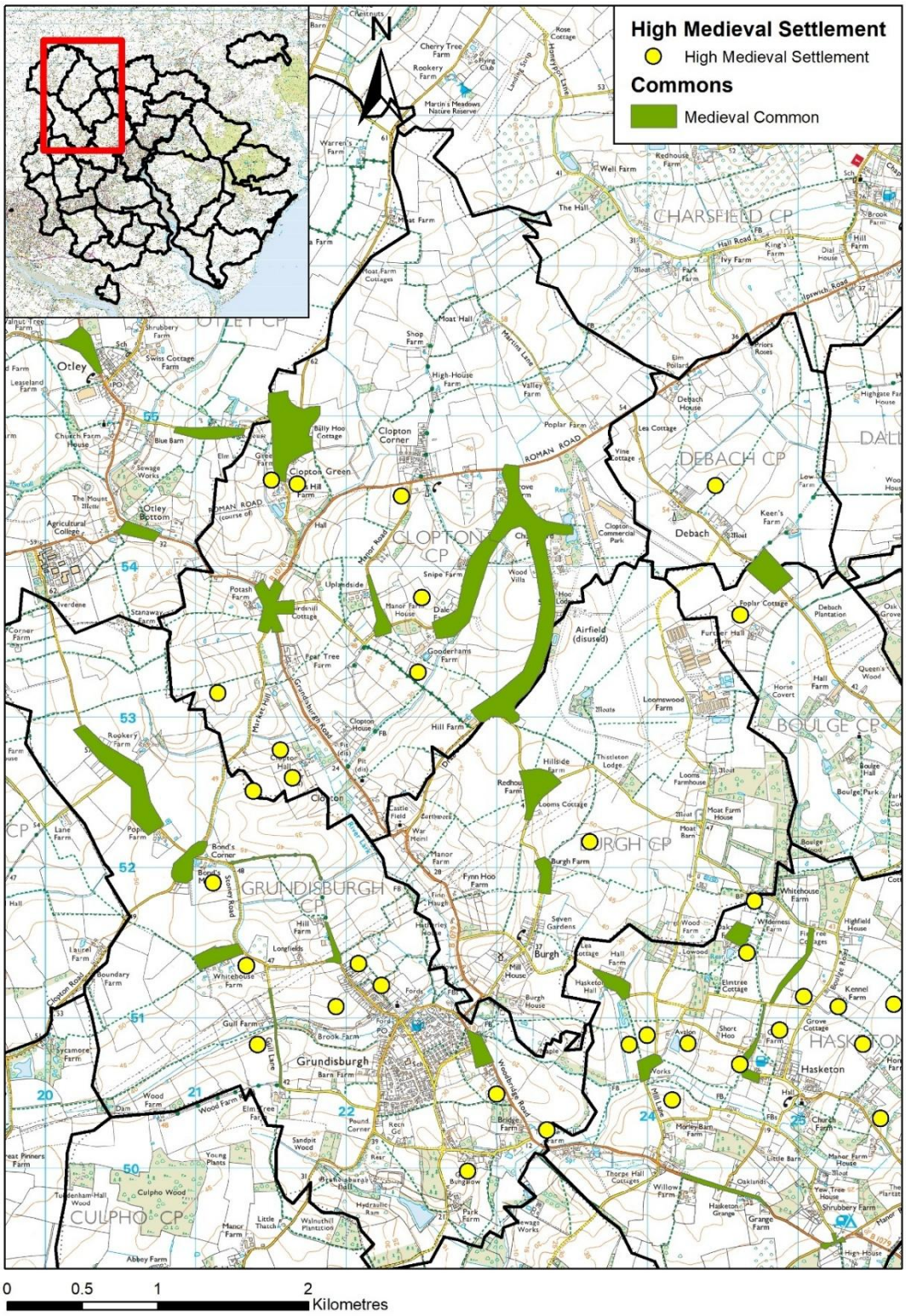

Figure 9.14: the distribution of High Medieval settlement in the north of the study area and its relationship with commons as recorded in Hodskinson's 1783 map of Suffolk and the nineteenth-century Tithe Apportionment maps. It is apparent that the common edge settlement pattern of East Suffolk is the product of the High Middle Ages. Source: DVSA 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 22 and 26.

The emergence of these common edge settlement forms was, as in the Late Saxon period, plausibly a reaction to the fragmentation of once contiguous areas of common grazing and the changing patterns of livestock husbandry this engendered. While the Middle Saxon period witnessed the seasonal movement of livestock, the expansion of cultivation and subsequent fragmentation of common grazing, as well as the increasing division of resources between neighbouring communities, limited opportunities to seasonally graze herds in the clay-covered uplands (Figure 9.15). In such circumstances, cattle were turned out onto grazing resources daily, with settlement drifting to the margins of commons to facilitate these changing patterns of livestock management. Indeed, this arable encroachment on the former waste often resulted in the abandonment of Late Saxon greenside settlements. The Late Saxon occupation site in Grundisburgh, for example, was apparently deserted in the High Middle Ages, with the site coming under cultivation, while the former settlement drifted to the new edge of the waste. Although this was a chronologically varied and inherently local process, intertwined with the differing pace of arable expansion, that common edge settlement forms emerged widely within the study area implies that upland grazing resources were extensively fractured by the later thirteenth century.

Although the term 'common edge drift' is widely used,[664] it is, perhaps, misleading. 'Common edge drift', as currently used, implies the movement of settlement from previously occupied sites, usually those surrounding parish churches, to the uplands, drifting throughout the landscape following the front of cultivation. In such models, it is often implied that the previously occupied settlement centre was abandoned, leaving parish churches isolated. While this desertion of antecedent sites is evident in some areas, as in Hasketon, such notions should not be overstated. In many cases, it is apparent that there was common edge *expansion*, rather than *drift*, with the former occupation site on the valley floor or slopes joined by those in the uplands, rather than being supplanted by these sites (Figure 9.16). In Bredfield and Grundisburgh, for example, the Late Saxon settlement core surrounding the parish church persisted throughout the High Middle Ages, with the expansion of settlement to the margins of commons and greens not resulting in the abandonment of these former sites; similar patterns are apparent on some two-thirds of clayland Late Saxon settlement sites. While the movement of settlement, coterminous with the abandonment of the previous site, did occur in some areas, many parishes were marked by common edge expansion, rather than 'drift'.[665]

[664] See, for example, Wegman, 'Common-Edge Drift'.
[665] Martin, 'Medieval Settlement', 237.

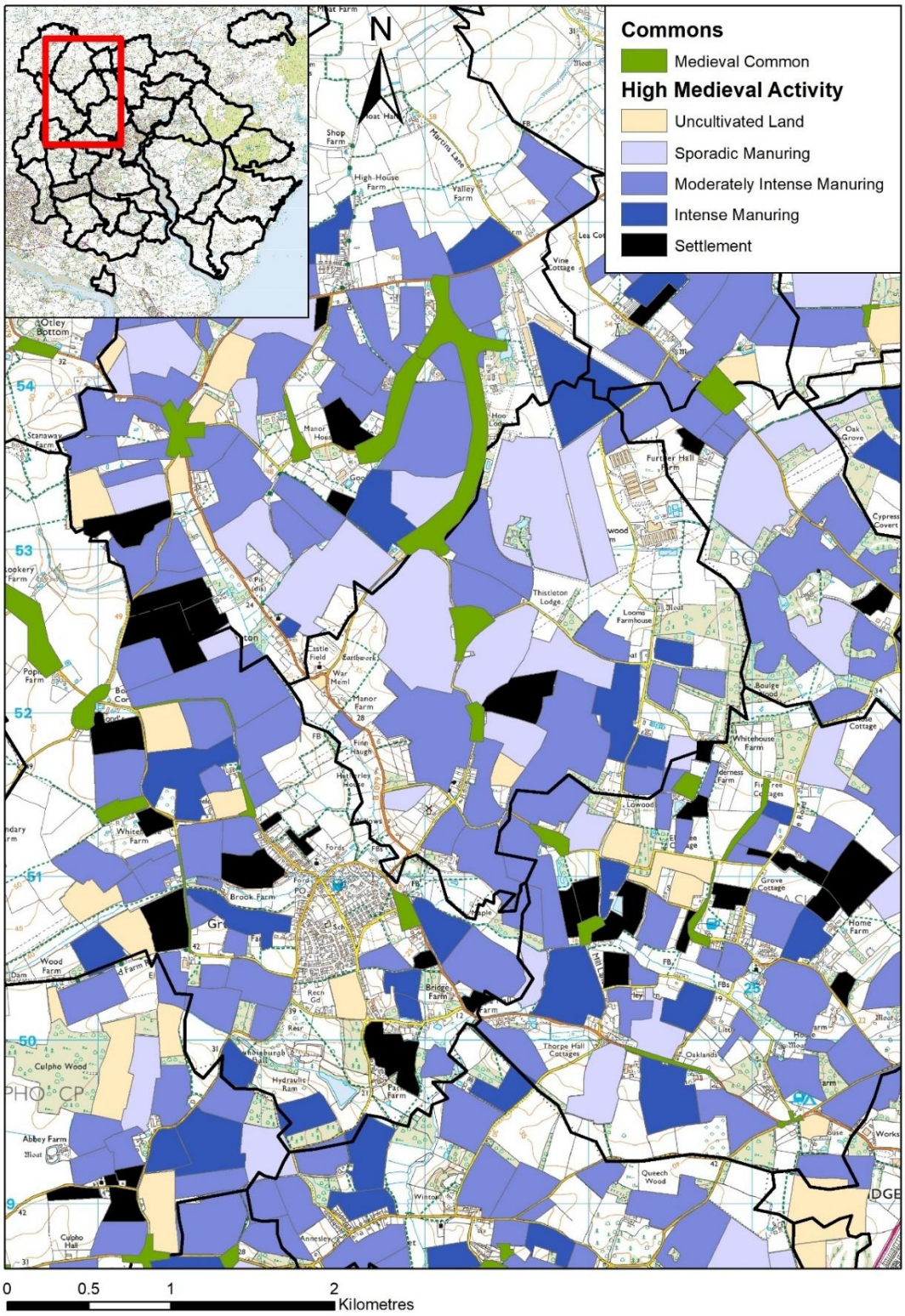

Figure 9.15: the distribution of medieval pottery in the north of the study area and its association with the common grazing resources of the area. This includes only those areas that were once common areas of grazing and excludes areas of several grazing, such as privatised areas of Sutton Heath. It is clear that the expansion of arable farming had greatly reduced the grazing resources available to farmers, underpinning the development of common edge settlement. Source: DVSA 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 22 and 26.

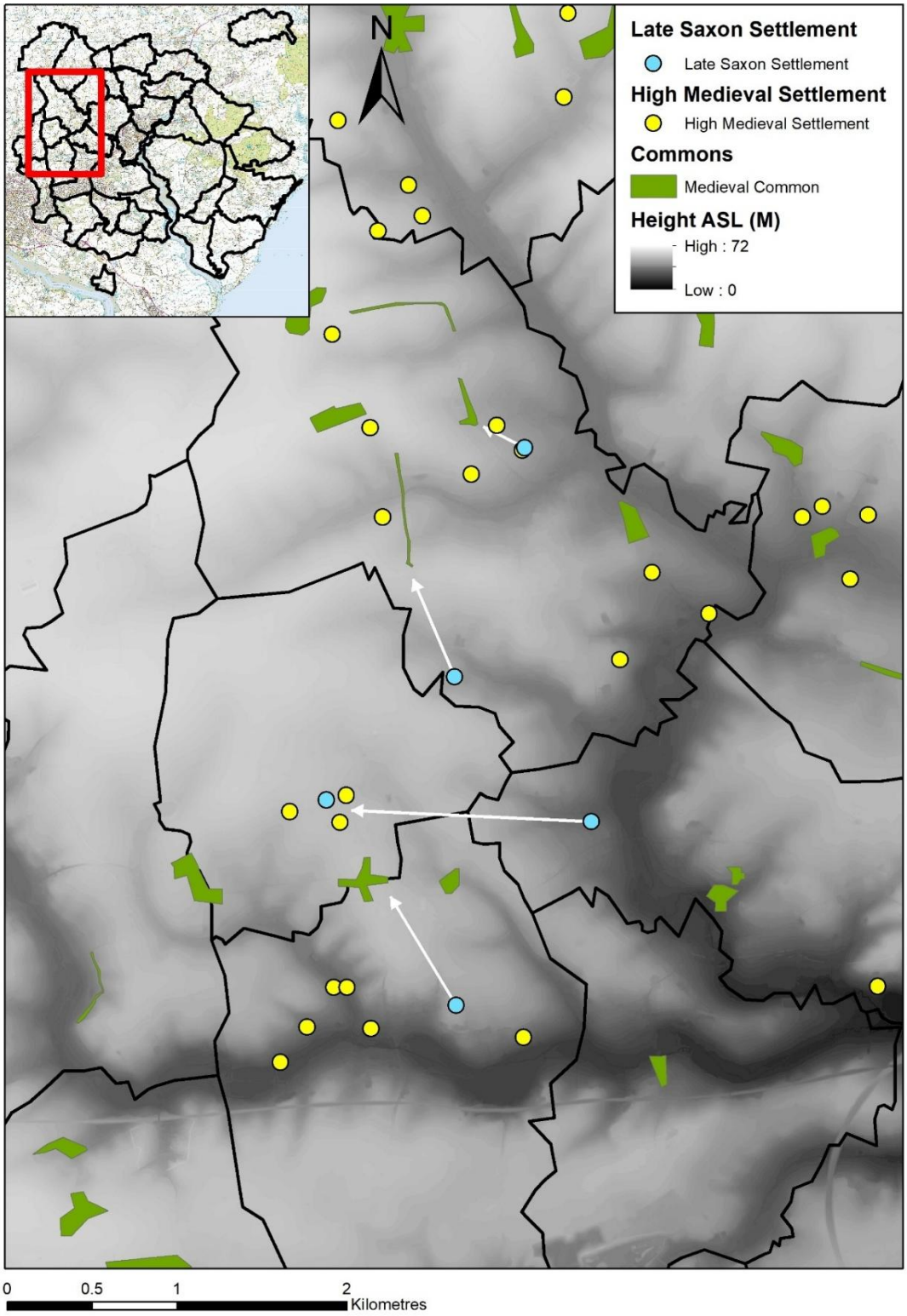

Figure 9.16: the distribution of High Medieval settlements in Grundisburgh and surrounding areas. While many Late Saxon settlements in the claylands remained occupied into the High Middle Ages, the expansion of cultivation, on occasion, resulted in the abandonment of previous occupation sites on the interfluves, with the area of occupation drifting to the new margins of common grazing resources, the direction of this movement indicated by white arrows. Source: DVSA 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 23, 25 and 28.

Growth and Decline in the High Medieval Landscape

The extent of High Medieval occupation and exploitation has long been suggested by numerous fieldwalking studies throughout East Anglia.[666] Due to the reliance on poorly dated pottery scatters, these studies have, however, been unable to discern whether these settlements were occupied simultaneously. The approach set out in Chapter Two offers opportunities to refine the precise chronology of occupation and abandonment.

Although the association between metalwork and areas of occupation is relatively limited, especially in the claylands, those scatters that are present in both the Sandlings and claylands imply that the High Medieval settlement pattern was characterised by a complex web of settlement stability and decline. While it has been suggested that the Black Death brought about significant settlement retrenchment, particularly in more marginal areas of the landscape, and indeed, this demographic decline certainly accelerated the pace of change, it is apparent that the High Medieval period was marked by both long-term patterns of settlement foundation and desertion.[667]

In many areas, settlement was inherently stable, remaining fixed in the landscape over many centuries. Occupation surrounding Sutton Church, for example, has a long history, stretching back into the later Roman period, albeit with evidence of discontinuity in the fifth century. Metalwork scatters from the site suggest that occupation continued throughout the High Middle Ages, with activity attested in the ploughzone until the eighteenth century. Similarly, settlement surrounding Ramsholt church, a site with Middle Saxon origins, continued until at least the fifteenth century. Such examples stand for a wider pattern; of the 91 settlements in the study area, 12 (13%) are directly associated with spreads of metalwork, while a further 22 (24%) have metalwork scatters recorded nearby, although some sites are marked by only a single artefact.[668] Of these sites, 21 (62%) were occupied from the twelfth century, and in many cases the Late Saxon period, into the fourteenth century, and often beyond.

While long-term settlement continuity has been posited above, some sites, such as that surrounding Methersgate Hall in Sutton, were abandoned during the High Middle Ages. Although this site, plausibly the location of a Domesday vill, was occupied in the Late Saxon period, metalwork evidence recovered from the area suggest that occupation ceased in the later

[666] See, for example, Davison, *South-East Norfolk*, 21–22.
[667] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 176–80.
[668] Those finds from adjacent fields are here considered as associated.

thirteenth century, a pattern repeated elsewhere, [669] with some 12% of sites associated with spreads of metalwork abandoned before the turn of the fourteenth century. While many High Medieval settlements persisted over long periods, such evidence suggests that this was not ubiquitous.

Yet, while these settlements were abandoned, others, such as the site lying to the northeast of the settlement core in Alderton, as well as in Foxhall, were, however, apparently founded at a similar date. Indeed, of the 34 sites associated with spreads of metalwork, 9 (26%) were apparently founded in the thirteenth century, although the limited archaeological visibility of twelfth-century settlement must be considered. While many of these sites may represent the expansion of relatively low status farmsteads, others, such as the Alderton and Foxhall settlements, are marked by large quantities of metalwork, including elite indicators such as harness pendants, and may, therefore, represent new manorial sites established through subinfeudation, rather than a wider expansion of settlement.[670] Importantly, those abandoned sites, such as that at Methersgate Hall, occupy 'prime' environmental contexts in the resource rich landscape of river valleys, while the newly founded site in Alderton occupies a more marginal location, suggesting that these patterns of settlement change were structured by factors other than the local environment.

While such patterns are best understood on a site-specific scale, and indeed, the paucity of metalwork precludes further interrogation in the claylands, there are wider trends in the data that are worthy of discussion. Although, to some degree, patterns of coin loss are a function of the quantities of coinage in circulation, as attested by the rapid increase in coin loss after the 1180 recoinage, the relative proportions of coinage recovered can, over long periods, provide a crude indicator of activity. Significantly, the patterns of coin loss in both the claylands and the Sandlings suggest a largely congruent, progressive expansion in activity, coterminous with population and settlement growth.

Although it has widely been suggested that the Black Death brought about sudden demographic and economic collapse, it is clear that, in the study area, a rapid decline in coin loss, arguably reflecting a decline in occupation and activity, occurred in the second and third decades of the fourteenth century. That this is not associated with any changes to the composition of English currency suggests that such patterns are real, rather than the result of changing coin supply.[671]

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[669] Williamson, *Sutton Hoo*, 75.
[670] PAS SF-DAC6AE and SF-0ED08C.
[671] Martin Allen, 'The Volume of the English Currency, 1158-1470', *Economic History Review* 54 (2001): 595–611.

This remarkable collapse in activity occurred in both the Sandlings and the claylands, suggesting that the factors underpinning these changing patterns of occupation and exploitation occurred at a scale larger than the subregions here interrogated.

This decline in coin loss plausibly reflects the impact of the Great Famine of the early fourteenth century, driven by a series of poor harvests and animal disease. Although Bailey has suggested that the agrarian economy of Suffolk weathered this storm with relative ease, the evidence from the study area suggests that this poor weather brought about a substantial decline in economic activity and, plausibly, settlement.[672] While this occurred in both of the environmental subregions here studied, this downturn in activity appears most pronounced in the Sandlings, albeit with a slight increase in the decades before the Black Death, suggesting that the impact of these climatological disasters was most marked in these areas of acid sand. While many have focussed on the impact of the rainfall of the 1310s on the agrarian economy,[673] the significance of drought in the 1320s and 1330s has recently been reasserted;[674] that this collapse of coin loss was most marked in the Sandlings may suggest that it was this period of drought that influenced such patterns, with a lack of rainfall limiting crop yields on these poorly water-retentive soils.

Significantly, the evidence from the study area, while admittedly limited, suggests that this period of poor harvests may have brought about a retreat of settlement from marginal environments. Many metalwork scatters from the most marginal areas of the claylands, such as on the clay covered uplands in Otley and Pettistree, do not extend beyond the 1320s, perhaps implying a degree of settlement retrenchment influenced by these climatic changes (Figures 9.19 and 9.20).[675] While, in the Sandlings, settlement sites were fixed in the river valleys and occupied, therefore, less marginal environments, the evident collapse in coin loss, including those coins recovered from settlement cores, may similarly suggest that some farmsteads were abandoned. While it has widely been remarked that the Black Death brought about a retreat from the margins, it is apparent that, in the study area at least, a proportion of this settlement change occurred before the arrival of pestilence.[676]

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[672] That the quantities of coinage lost remain limited in the period after the Black Death (239 coins in 1200-1300 compared to 73 in 1350-1450) may suggest that this reflects real patterns.
[673] Ian Kershaw, 'The Great Famine and Agrarian Crisis in England 1315–1322', *Past & Present* 59 (1973): 3–50; David Stone, *Decision-Making in Medieval Agriculture* (Oxford University Press, 2005), 45–80.
[674] David Stone, 'The Impact of Drought in Early Fourteenth-Century England', *Economic History Review* 67 (2014): 435–62.
[675] Such notions are, however, based upon small spreads of metalwork.
[676] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 177–84.

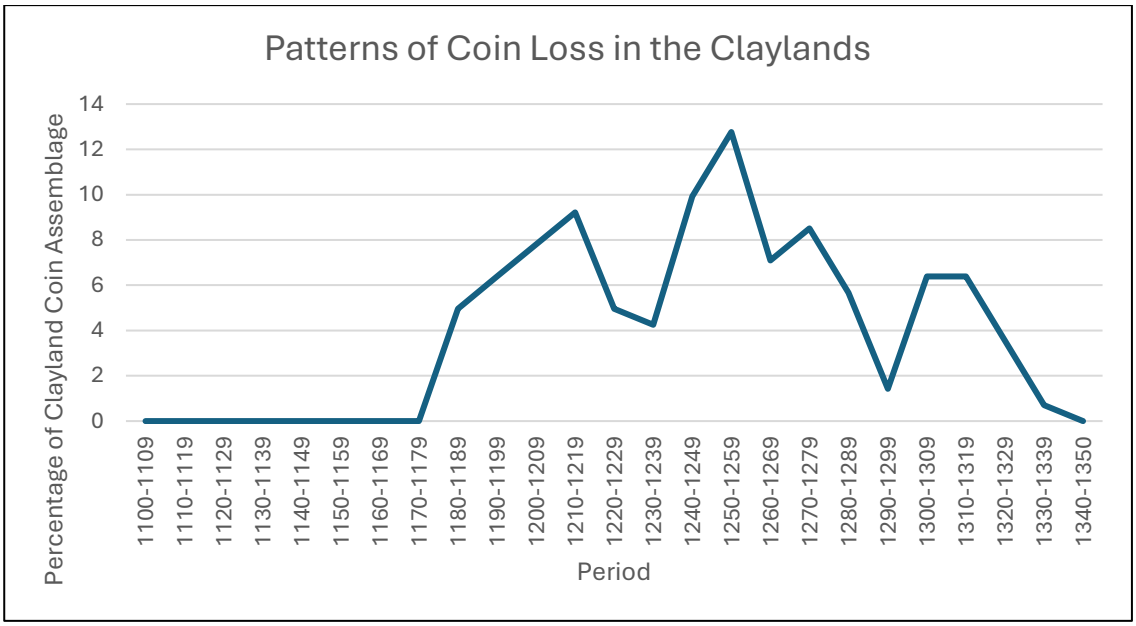

Figure 9.17: the patterns of coin loss in the claylands. Although only based on a limited dataset of 141 coins, the evidence above suggests a significant collapse of activity in the first decades of the fourteenth century. Source: PAS.

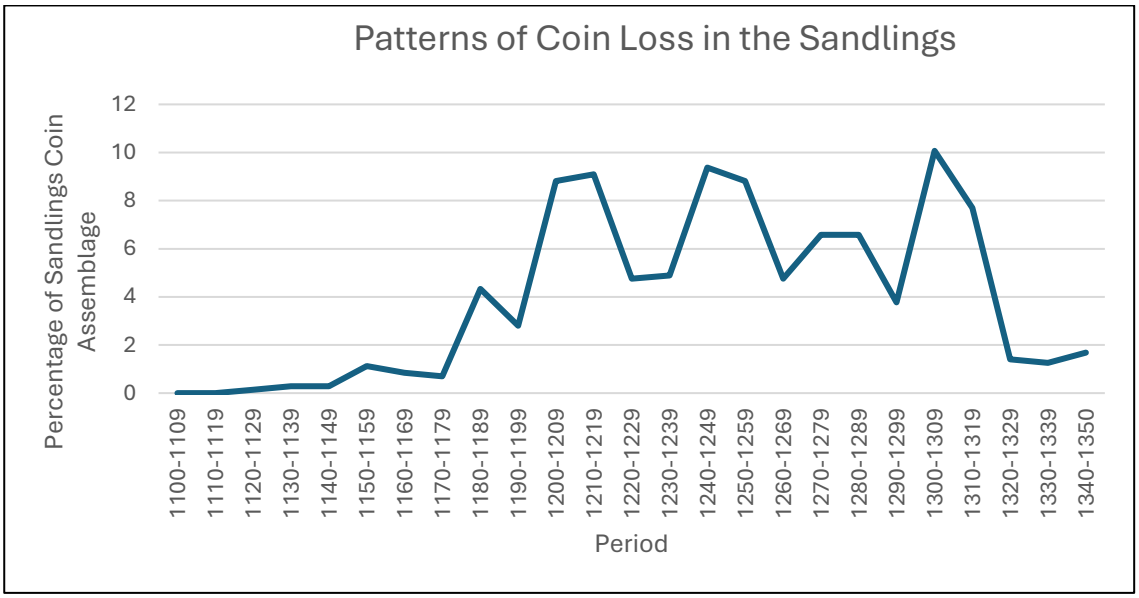

Figure 9.18: the patterns of coin loss in the Sandlings, based upon a dataset of 715 coins. While only providing a crude indicator of patterns of activity, a significant contraction in coin loss is apparent in the early decades of the fourteenth century, plausibly related to the Great Famine and droughts of the 1310s and 1320s. Source: PAS.

Metalwork and Medieval Manorialism

It has been suggested in Chapter Eight that the Late Saxon period witnessed the proliferation of extensive social differentiation throughout the countryside. While the Late Saxon Sandlings was characterised by widespread social differentiation, the claylands appear a much less polarised landscape, although the extent of this should not be overstated. Such patterns continued, and indeed deepened, in the High Middle Ages. It has been demonstrated in Chapter Two that High Medieval social differentiation is manifested in metalwork scatters, with elite sites demarcated by significant spreads of metalwork, particularly elite indicators such as seals, equestrian items and precious metal artefacts. Low status farmsteads, meanwhile, are often delineated by small scatters of utilitarian items, such as buckles and pins, or on occasion, no metalwork scatters at all.

While, as in previous periods, the Sandlings are characterised by large quantities of metalwork, only limited scatters of metal artefacts are apparent in High Suffolk, despite the identification of numerous settlement sites by fieldwalking. While pottery scatters suggest that parishes such as Grundisburgh and Hasketon were densely settled, few metal artefacts have been recovered from these areas, implying that such sites were farmsteads of relatively moderate status. Indeed, only 17% of all High Medieval metalwork derives from areas of clay soil, suggesting the presence of rather limited wealth in the claylands (Figures 9.21 and 9.22).[677] Significantly, those scatters that are present are relatively minor, suggesting that wealth was somewhat evenly distributed throughout the countryside, implying that, as in earlier periods, the claylands was a landscape of moderately wealthy freemen farmers and peasant proprietors. This is not, however, to suggest that the claylands were entirely undifferentiated. Small scatters of metalwork, including limited numbers of elite indicators such as book fittings, suggest the presence of some degree of social and economic differentiation, with some farmers more prosperous than their neighbours, perhaps owing to the fortunes of soil fertility or the lack of coheirs fragmenting ancestral holdings.[678]

[677] 31% of metalwork dating from all periods was recovered from High Suffolk, suggesting that such patterns are not the result of recovery bias.
[678] See, for example, PAS SF-3BEBF7 and SF-670A96.

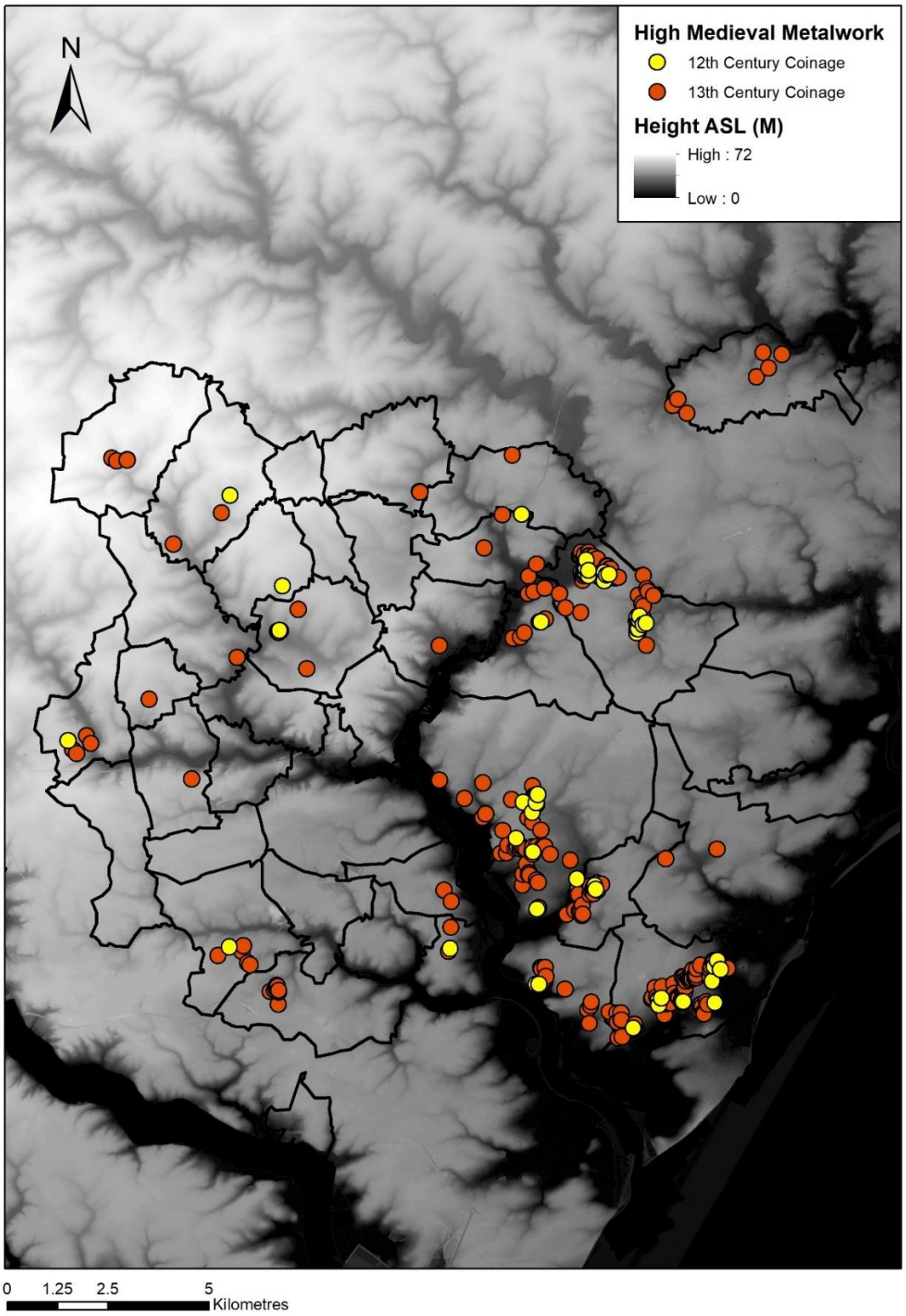

Figure 9.19: the distribution of twelfth-and-thirteenth-century coinage in the study area and its relationship with topography. It is apparent that the thirteenth century witnessed a significant expansion of activity, including in marginal areas of the landscape. Source: PAS.

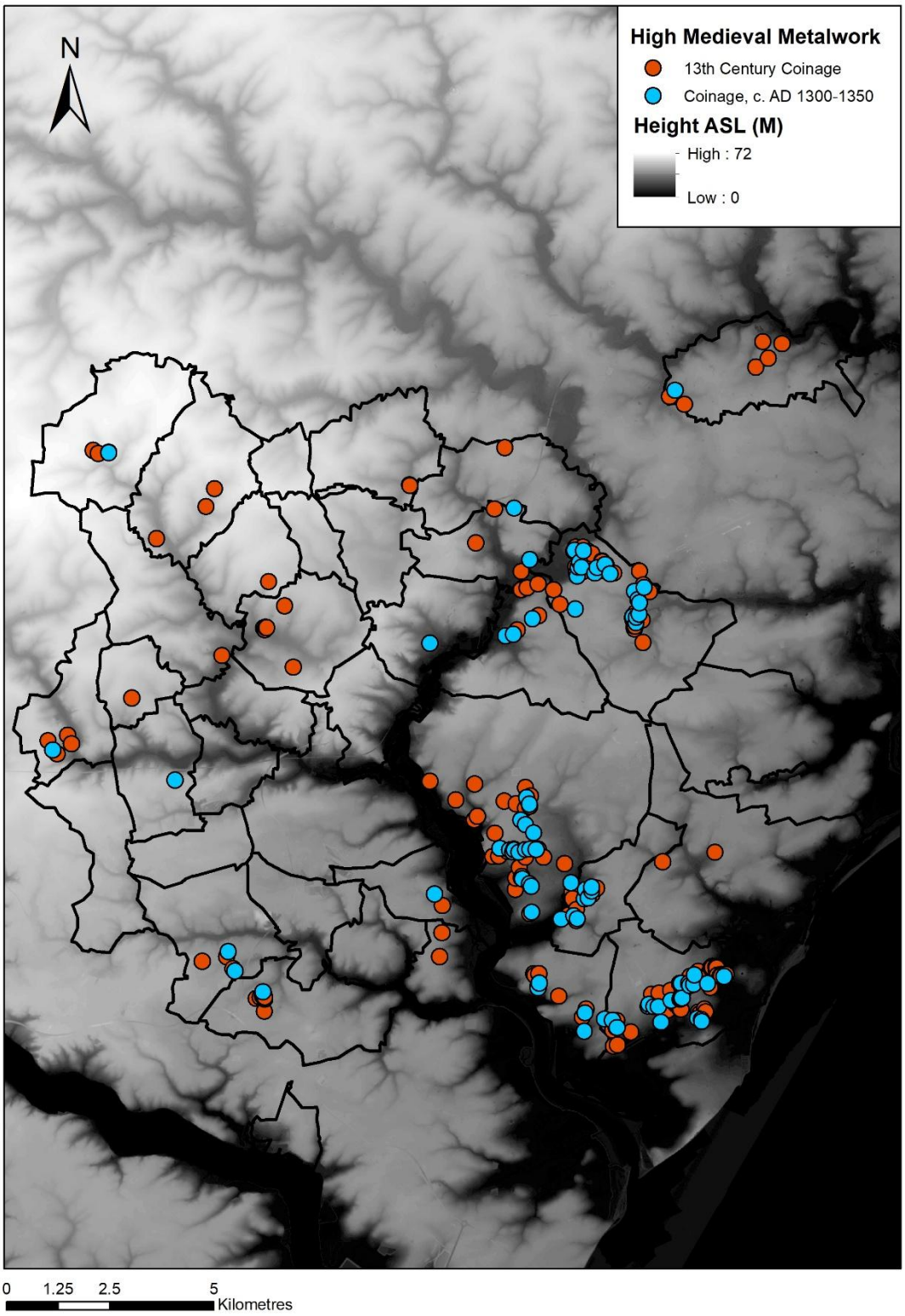

Figure 9.20: the distribution of thirteenth-and-fourteenth-century metalwork in the study area. Although only providing a crude indicator of activity at any given period, the evidence above suggests some degree of retrenchment to more favourable areas of the landscape occurred during the fourteenth century. Source: PAS.

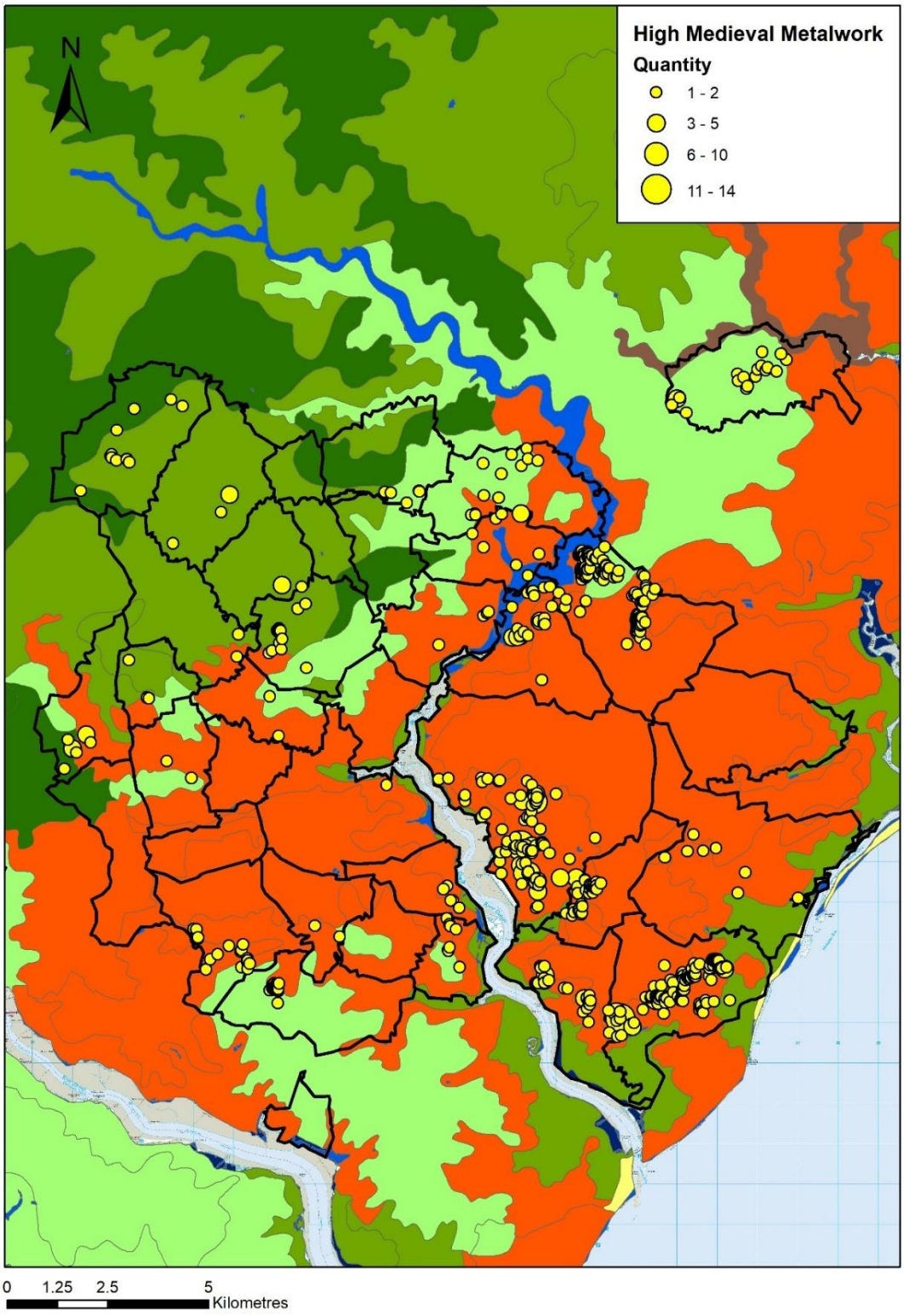

Figure 9.21: the distribution of metalwork in the study area and its relationship with the soils of the region. As in earlier periods, it is clear that the Sandlings was marked by larger scatters of metalwork than in the claylands. Source: PAS.

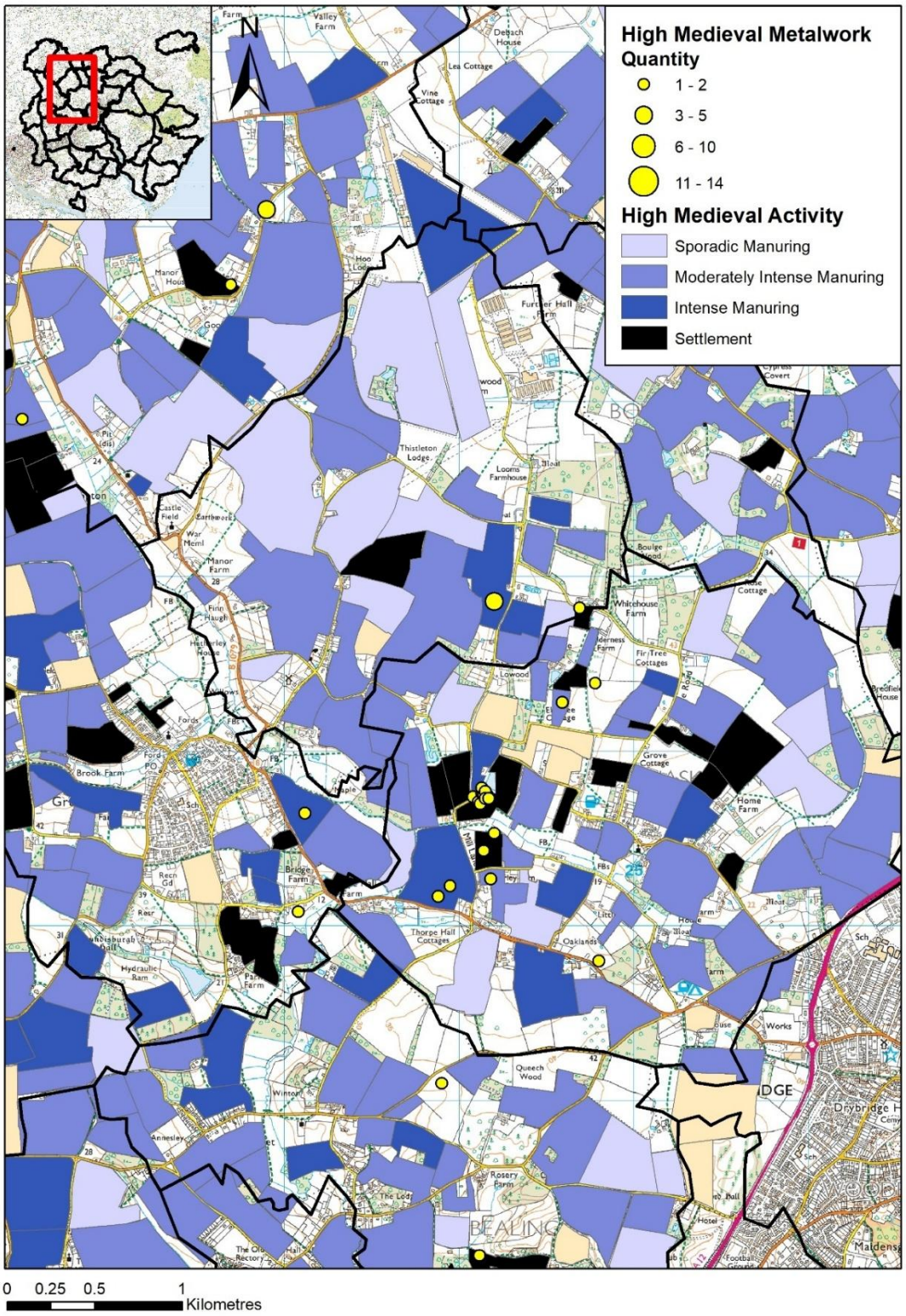

Figure 9.22: the distribution of High Medieval pottery and metalwork in the claylands of the study area. Parishes such as Bredfield are marked by only limited spreads of metalwork relatively evenly scattered throughout the countryside, suggesting the presence of numerous, moderately wealthy peasant proprietors. Source: DVSA 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23 and 37.

Figure 9.23: High Medieval elite indicators from the study area. Again, such objects are more common in areas of acid sand, although the small number of these objects recovered from the claylands implies the presence of some degree of social differentiation in these areas. **1.** SF-909994 silver gilt furniture mount. **2.** SF-CC99BE lead personal seal. **3.** SF-670A96 book clasp. **4.** SF-330557 silver penny of Edward I. **5.** SF-DF6432 heraldic horse harness pendant. **6.** SF-56F631 silver annular brooch. Images not to scale.

Figure 9.24: High Medieval artefacts typically associated with low status occupation recorded with the PAS. Small quantities of coinage, particularly smaller denominations, occasionally recovered from low status settlement sites. **1.** SF-9E4C95 copper alloy buckle. **2.** SF-438D82 copper alloy strap fitting. **3.** SF-DF0BC1 copper alloy buckle. **4.** SF-0AD035 silver cut farthing of Henry III. Images not to scale.

Indeed, the numerous moated sites scattered throughout the claylands similarly attest limited social differentiation, established by wealthy peasants and manorial lords. This social polarisation, as attested in the ploughzone at least, appears, however, both less significant and more widely distributed throughout society than in the Sandlings.

While the claylands appear relatively undifferentiated, substantial wealth was in circulation in the Sandlings, with large spreads of elite indicators evident in parishes such as Sutton, Eyke and Alderton, with 83% of all metalwork, as well as, for example, 80% of those non-numismatic precious metal items, recovered from areas of acid sand (Figures 9.23, 9.24, 9.25 and 9.26).[679] This prosperity was not, however, evenly distributed. In Sutton, for example, while sizeable spreads of metalwork have been recovered from the Sutton Hall and Sutton Church sites, no metalwork is associated with the settlement area to the east of the church or in the south of the parish, despite metal detecting having taken place nearby. Similarly, the White Hall site in Hemley is marked by a sizeable spread of metalwork while the settlement core surrounding the parish church is denoted by only limited quantities of material. Such evidence suggests that,

[679] See, for example, PAS SF-6CF102, SF-76A852 and SF-D0F0B4.

while the High Medieval Sandlings were a wealthy and exploited countryside, society was highly polarised, with the landscape of wealthy manorial sites punctuated by low status peasant farmsteads, tied to and dependent on these elite centres.

These patterns of social differentiation are also documented in contemporary society at a wider scale. The 1327 Lay Subsidy evidences that the claylands was comprised of numerous taxpayers contributing moderate sums. In Grundisburgh and Burgh, for example, recorded together in the assessment, a total of 36 taxpayers are recorded, suggesting the presence of numerous members of society of moderate wealth. Indeed, the density of those paying over two shillings, as well as the taxpaying population, is larger in the claylands, implying a landscape of moderately wealthy peasants. Although some social differentiation is attested in the varied rates of tax, this appears relatively minor; as argued above, the claylands was apparently a landscape of peasant proprietors and wealthy freemen (Figures 9.27 and 9.28).

Meanwhile, although significant wealth is attested in the Sandlings by large taxpayers such as Richard Creting and William Foucher in Brightwell and Playford, each contributing over six shillings, this wealth was less widely distributed than in the claylands.[680] While small numbers of wealthy landowners were present, the density of taxpayers, as well as the number of those contributing over two shillings, is lower than in neighbouring areas of High Suffolk. In parishes such as Shottisham and Hollesley, for example, a total of only three landowners contributed over two shillings, while only thirteen taxpayers are recorded in the combined assessments of Playford and Brightwell; such examples imply a much greater disparity between the wealthiest and poorest taxpayers than in the claylands. While such patterns are, to some degree, masked by the exemption from tax of those owning movable goods worth less than five shillings,[681] the Sandlings again appears an extensively polarised society, marked by wealthy manorial lords and an impoverished peasantry.

[680] Hervey, *Suffolk in 1327*, 119.
[681] Hervey, *Suffolk in 1327*, ix.

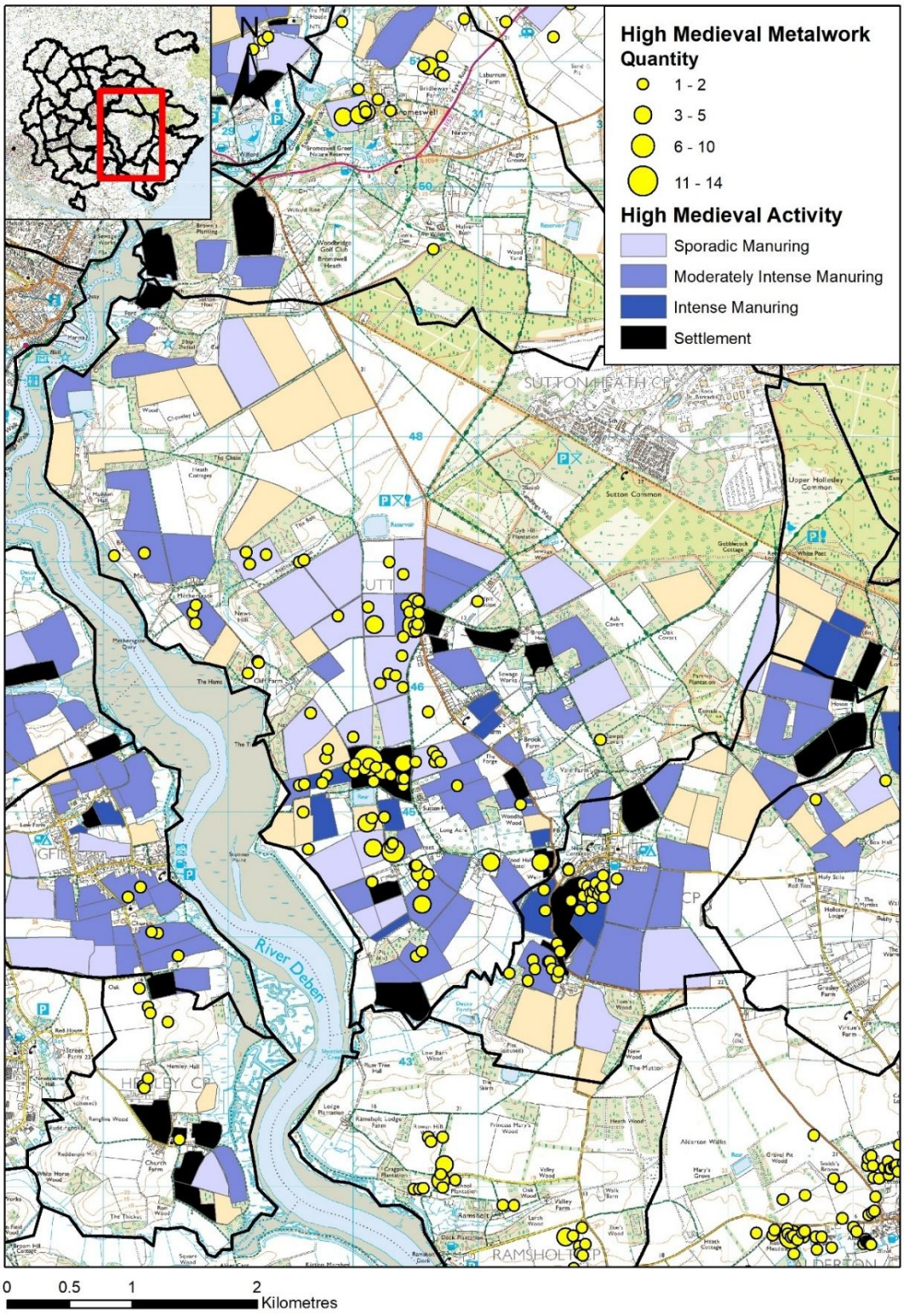

Figure 9.25: the distribution of High Medieval pottery and metalwork in Sutton and surrounding parishes. While some ceramically attested settlement sites are marked by sizeable spreads of pottery, others are marked by only limited metalwork scatters, suggesting a significant degree of social differentiation. Source: DVSA 6, 7, 14, 19, 20, 23, 29, 31, 33, 36 and 37 and PAS.

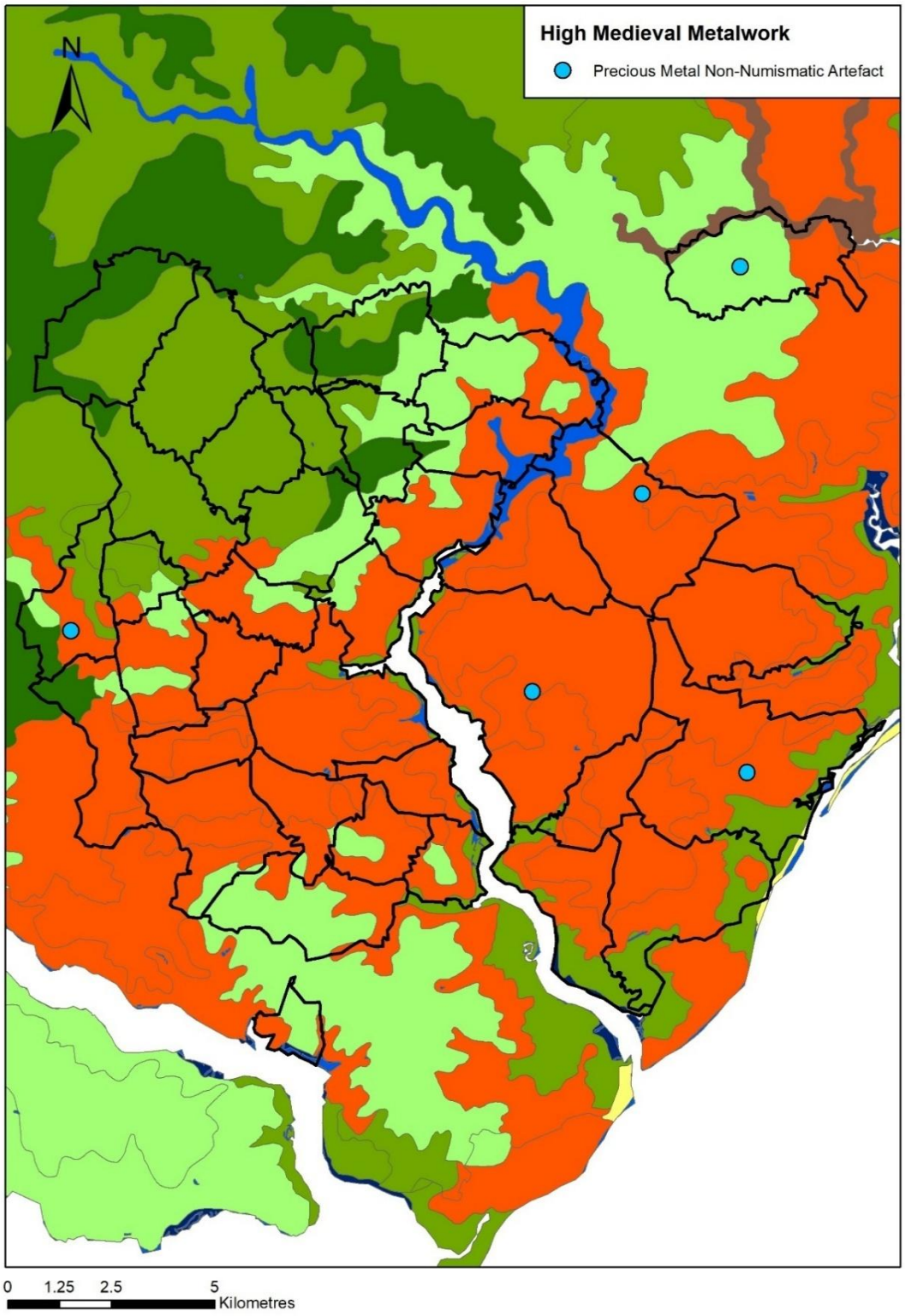

Figure 9.26: the distribution of non-numismatic precious metal artefacts in the study area and its relationship with the soils of the study area. The vast majority of these elite indicators were recovered from areas of acid sand. Source: PAS.

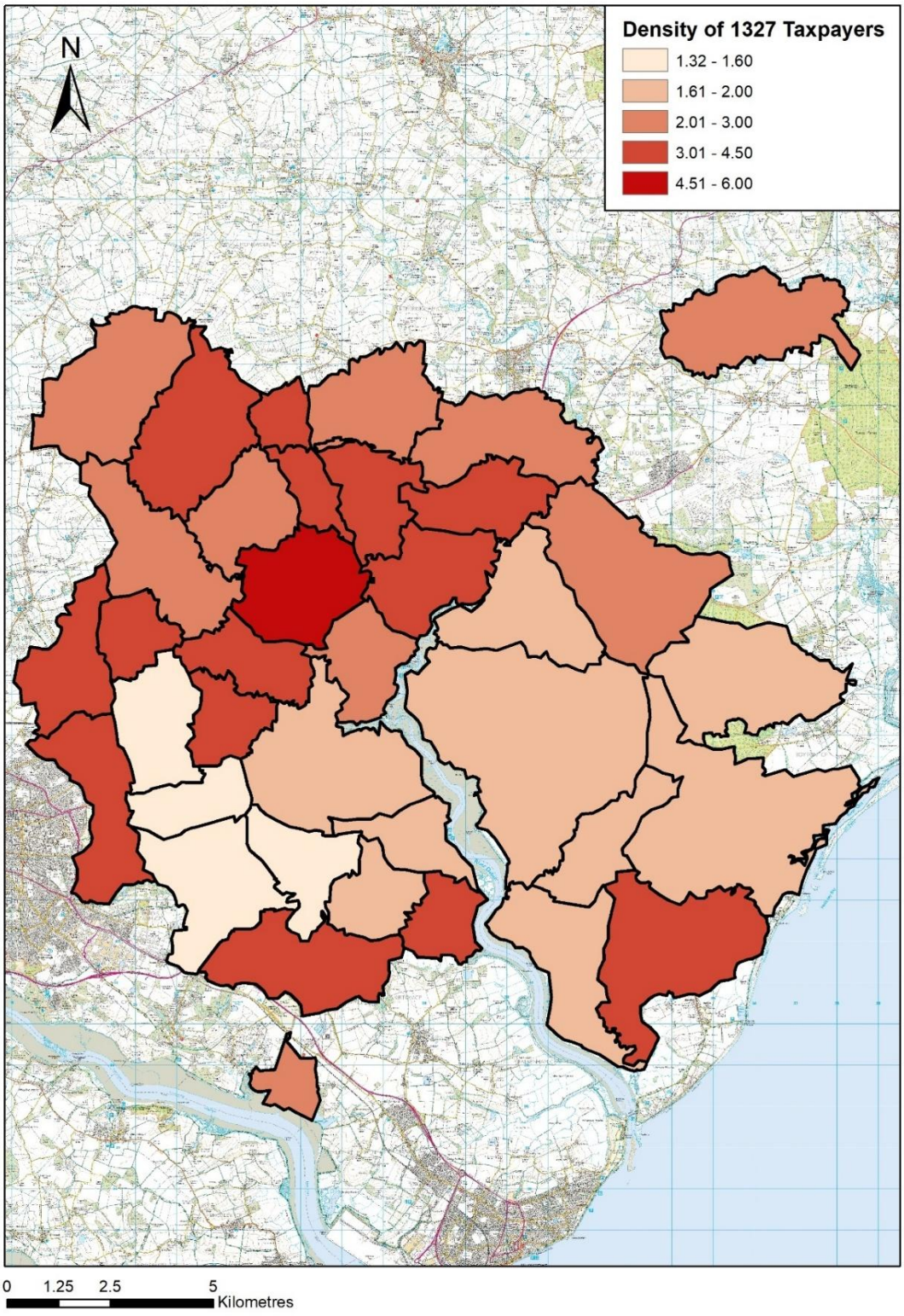

Figure 9.27: the density of taxpayers recorded in the 1327 Lay Subsidy Rolls per 100 hectares (after Hervey, 1906). The Sandlings was marked by a small number of wealthy landowners contributing large sums, while the overall density of taxpayers was larger in the claylands, reflecting the widely distributed wealth in this area.

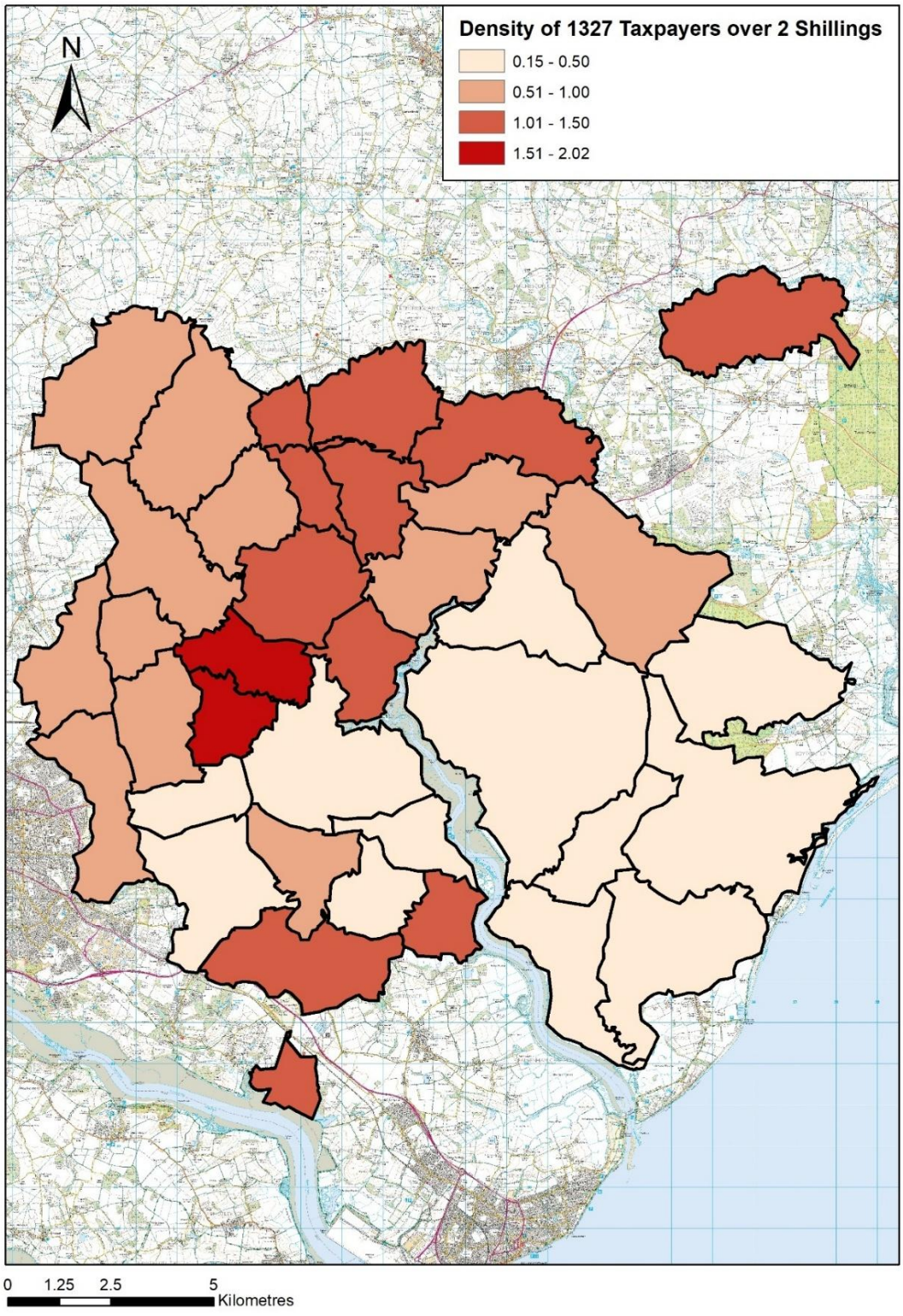

Figure 9.28: the density of those recorded as paying over 2 shillings in the 1327 Lay Subsidy Rolls per 100 hectares (after Hervey 1906). Again, while the Sandlings was characterised by a small number of landowners who were significantly wealthy, the claylands was marked by much more widely distributed prosperity.

High Medieval Arable Farming

The growth of cultivation in the High Middle Ages was no less dramatic than the coterminous proliferation of settlement. Some 3,840 hectares of land was under some form of cultivation in this period, a 427% increase from the last centuries of Anglo-Saxon rule, although the greater archaeological visibility of High Medieval activity must be noted (Figures 9.29 and 9.30).[682] While some of this land was only sporadically under the plough, this explosion of cultivation surpassed the heights of arable farming reached in the later Roman period, with the thirteenth-century arable area some 50% larger than in the third and fourth centuries. It has been suggested that the arable acreage increased between 1066 and *c.* 1300 at a rate of 0.17% per year;[683] the degree of arable expansion attested in the ploughzone in the study area appears much greater, however, perhaps by a factor of ten.

This expansion of cultivation brought a wider range of environments under the plough than at any time previously. Many arable fields, particularly those most intensively exploited areas, were located in the valleys of rivers and streams; indeed, the vast majority of land on valley slopes was cultivated in this period. Such patterns are again structured by the fertility of these riverine soils, although the impact of the distance decay model of manuring must also be acknowledged. More marginal environments were, however, also brought under the plough, with the heavy clays of the Ragdale and Hanslope Associations and the Newport 4 soils of the Sandlings, some of the most infertile in the district, cultivated, although perhaps only sporadically (Figures 9.31 and 9.32). That the population rapidly expanded until the demographic catastrophes of the fourteenth century suggests that there was indeed a sizeable increase in agrarian output.

This expansion of arable farming has often been viewed as a phenomenon of the claylands, associated with the wider adoption of the mouldboard plough and the larger workforce available in this area. Although this is true, with the area under the plough in High Suffolk outstripping that in the Sandlings for the first time, the arable area in the Sandlings expanded by some 361%, with arable fields encroaching on the upland heaths in parishes such as Shottisham and Kesgrave

[682] Williamson, 'Agriculture, Lords and Landscape', 221. The extent of land under the plough in the study area appears greater than in other areas of Suffolk, with only 74% of the total area of Ickworth in West Suffolk cultivated in the 1270s. See Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 74.
[683] Bruce M. S. Campbell, *English Seigniorial Agriculture, 1250-1450* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 388–90.

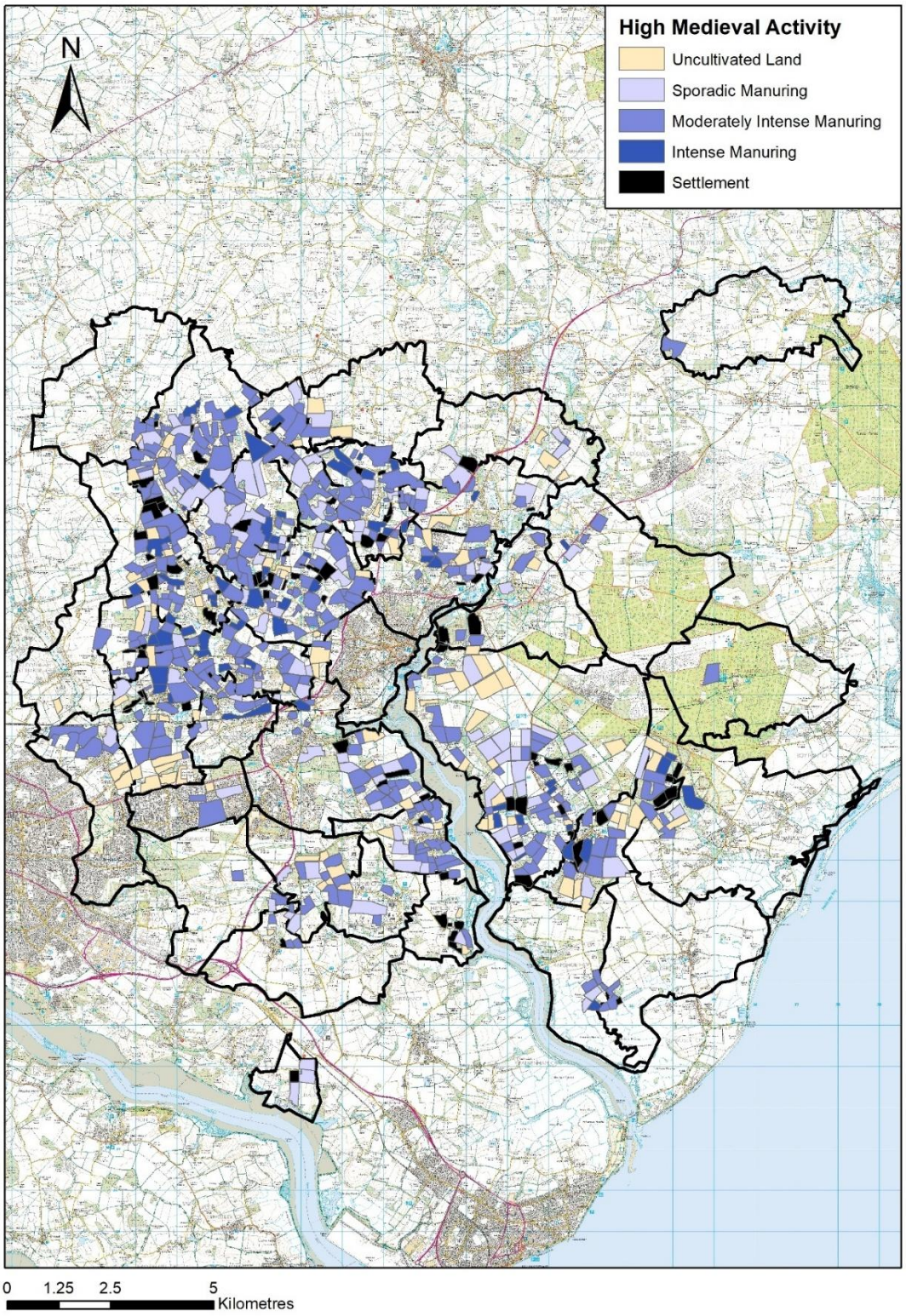

Figure 9.29: the distribution of High Medieval arable cultivation in the study area. Source: DVSA 1-37.

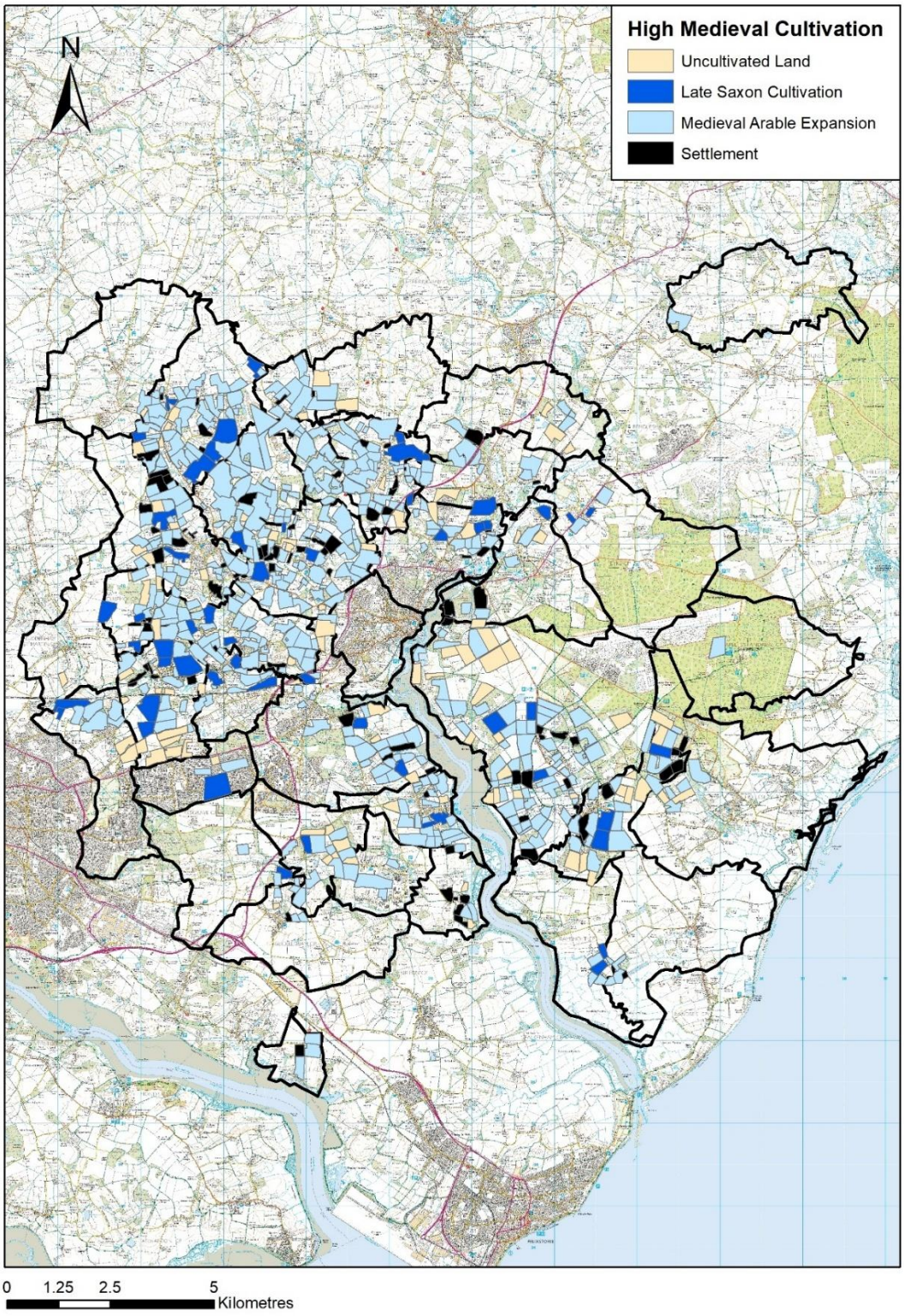

Figure 9.30: the extent of High Medieval period and its association with the Late Saxon arable area. It is clear that a sizeable expansion of cultivation occurred in the High Middle Ages. Source: DVSA 1-37.

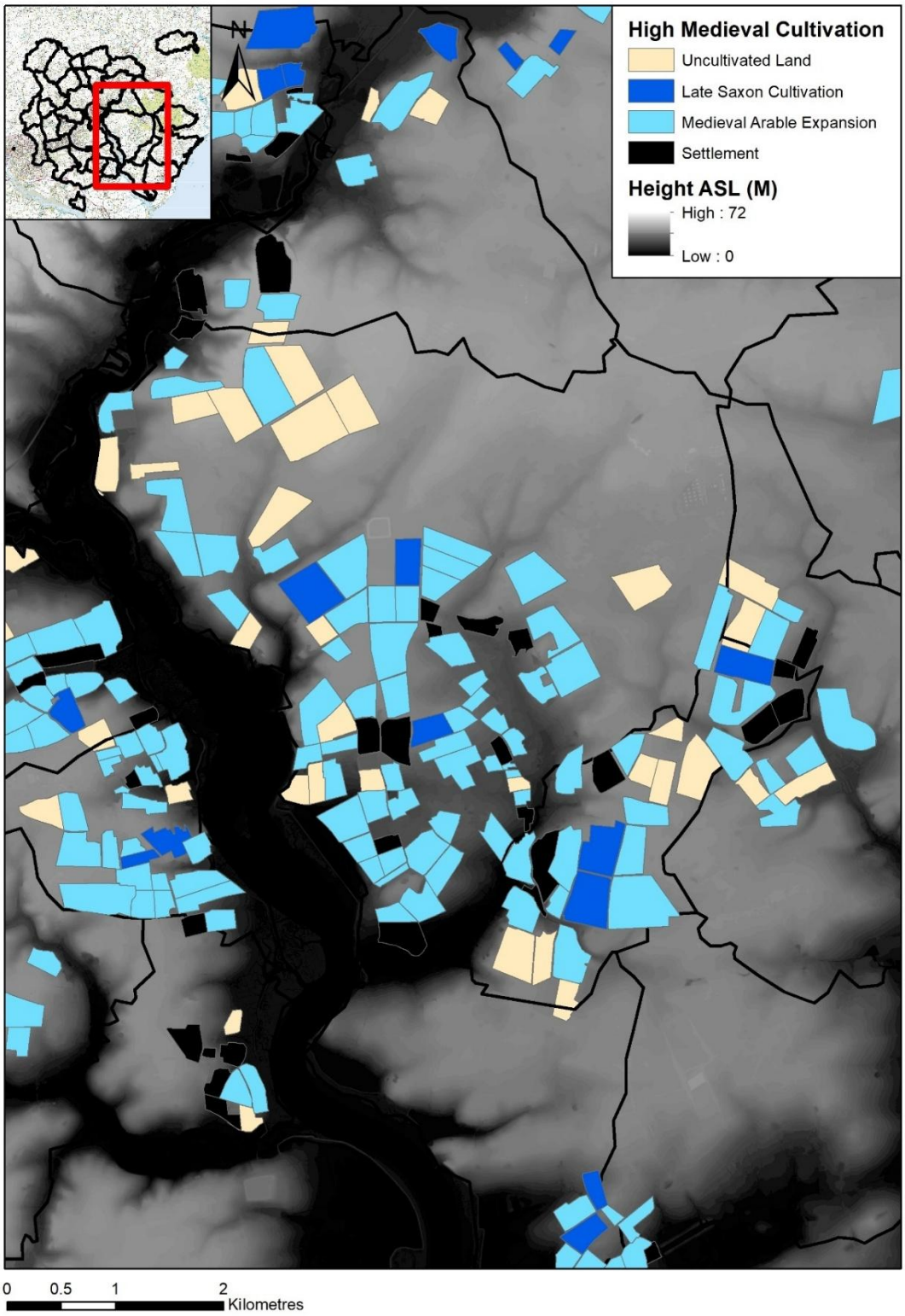

Figure 9.31: the expansion of arable cultivation in Sutton and surrounding parishes. High Medieval cultivation expanded onto the uplands, including into areas of infertile Newport 4 soils. Source: DVSA 6, 7, 14, 19, 20, 23, 29, 31, 33, 36 and 37.

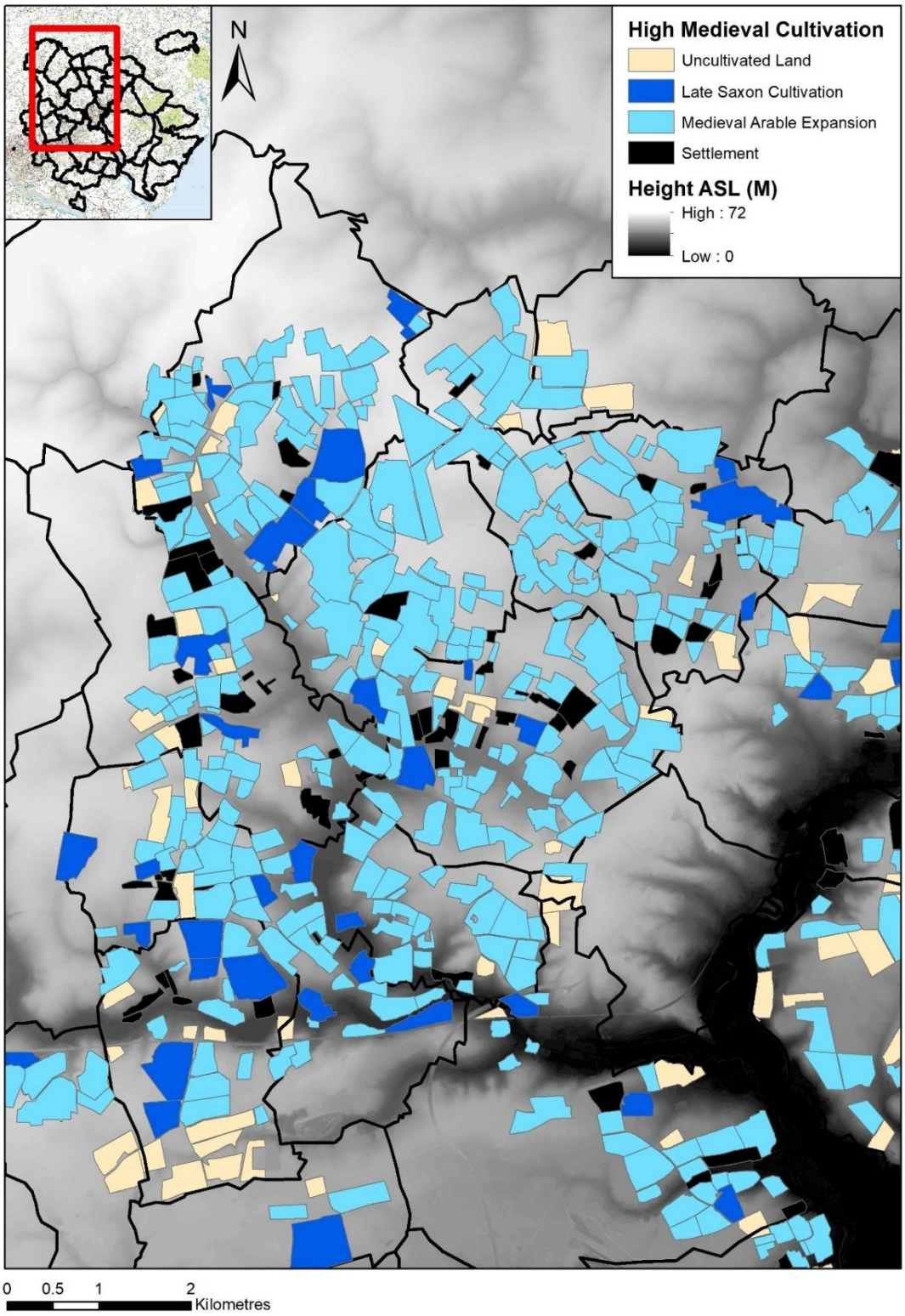

Figure 9.32: the extent of High Medieval cultivation in the claylands and its association with the Late Saxon arable area. Cultivation similarly expanded onto the interfluves in High Suffolk. Source: DVSA 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 33, 37.

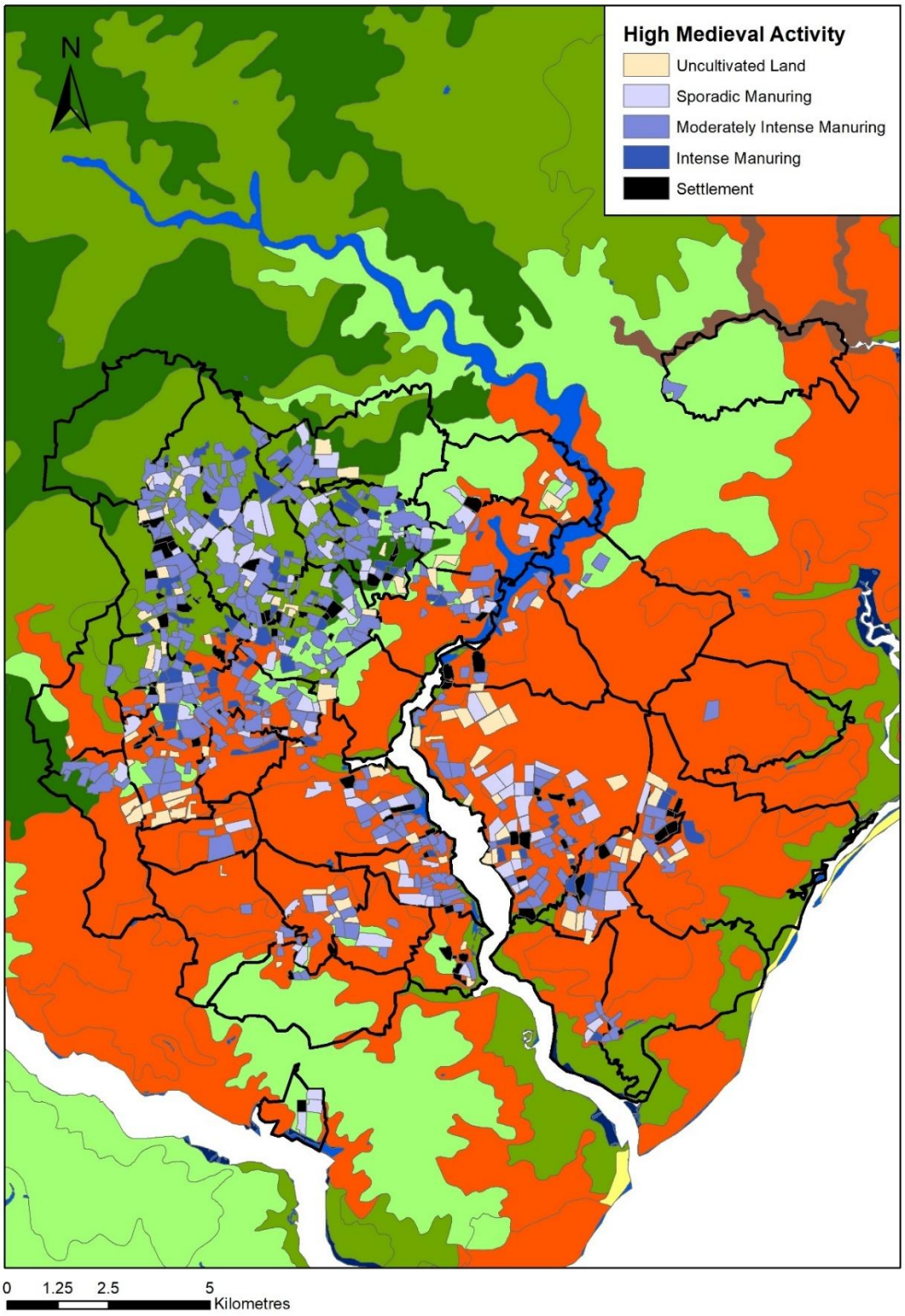

Figure 9.33: the extent of High Medieval cultivation in the study area and its association with the dominant soils of the region. It is clear that the claylands was the centre of grain production in the medieval period. Source: DVSA 1-37.

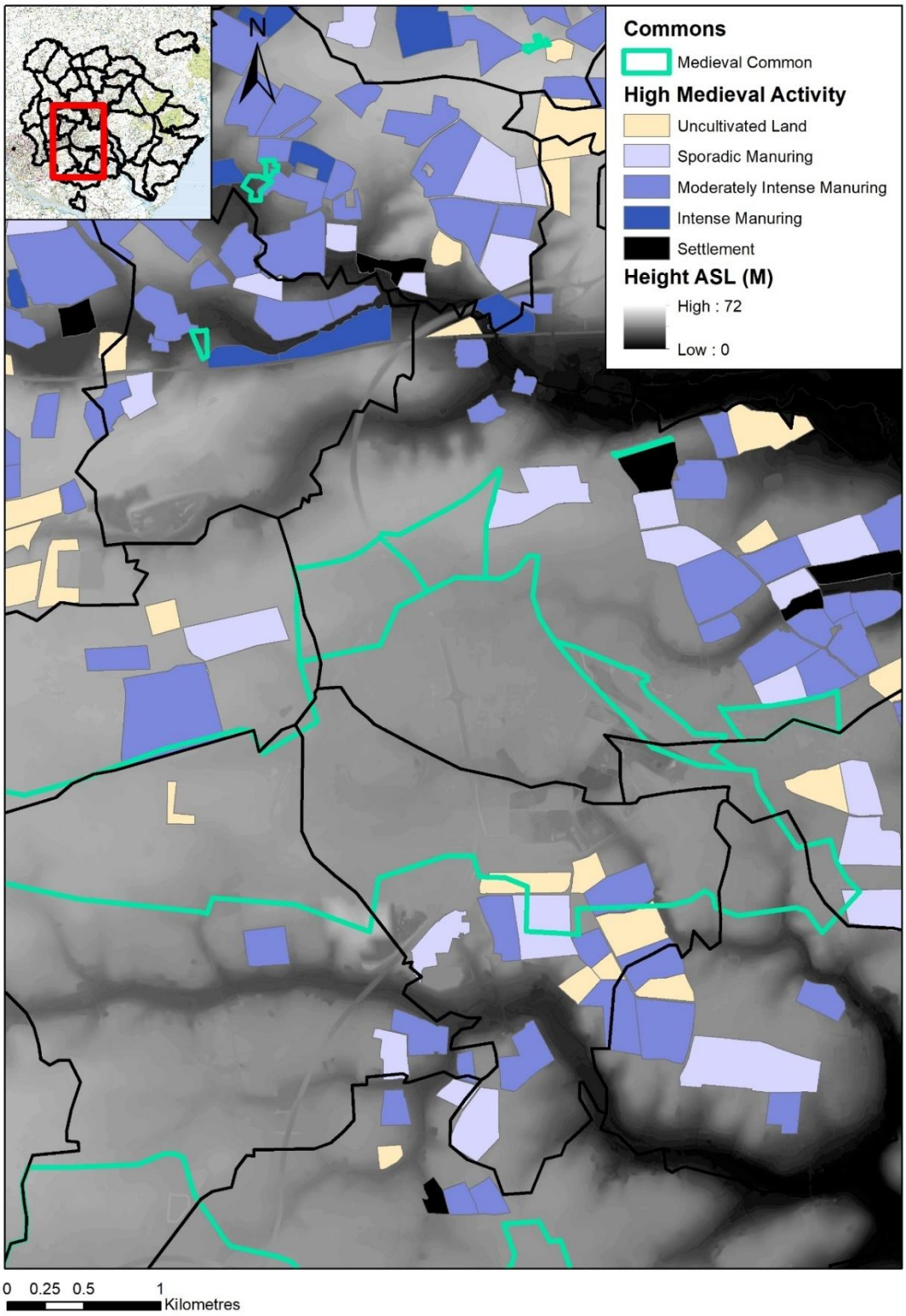

Figure 9.34: the distribution of arable cultivation in Brightwell and its association with heaths as shown on Hodskinson's 1783 map and the nineteenth-century Tithe Apportionment maps. Areas of post-medieval heathland were apparently under the plough in the High Middle Ages, suggesting that the arable area of the medieval period may, in some areas, have been larger than that of the post-medieval period. Source: DVSA 4, 5, 7, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 28 and 36.

(Figure 9.33).[684] Indeed, it is possible that the area under the plough in the High Middle Ages was, in parts of the Sandlings, greater than that cultivated in the late eighteenth century (Figure 9.34). Areas depicted as heath by Hodskinson in Brightwell, for example, were apparently sporadically cultivated in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, suggesting that the arable landscape of the High Medieval Sandlings may have been larger than its post-medieval counterpart.[685]

While much arable expansion in the claylands came at the expense of the wood pastures of the uplands, manuring scatters recovered from the margins of ancient woodland imply that areas of treed land were also assarted in the High Middle Ages. It has been suggested in Chapter Eight that the Late Saxon extent of Culpho Wood was perhaps 100 hectares greater than in the present day, with the front of cultivation some 200m from the edge of the woodland as recorded in the nineteenth century. During the High Middle Ages, cultivation progressively encroached upon the woodland, fragmenting and reducing the extent of the once contiguous treed land, with High Medieval manuring scatters extending to the boundary of the modern wood in some areas (Figure 9.34). Similar patterns are apparent in Martlesham, Great Bealings and Hasketon, with High Medieval cultivation expanding to the margins of ancient woodland, suggesting that large tracts of previously forested land were grubbed out to make way for arable cultivation. While pottery scatters simply imply that this expansion took place between the early twelfth and fourteenth centuries, metalwork recovered from these assarts suggest that this encroachment on former areas of woodland took place during the thirteenth century. Metalwork from Culpho, for example, suggests that cultivation expanded by *c.* 1250, while evidence from Playford implies that the frontier of arable farming had reached the present margins of Lux Wood by the early fourteenth century at the latest. Such a chronology accords well with the decline of tree cover noted in pollen studies in the region.[686]

The factors underpinning this expansion of cultivation are similar to those posited in previous chapters. The demographic growth of the High Middle Ages brought about an increased emphasis on arable farming to feed the expanding population. Indeed, this

[684] Indeed, the continued emphasis on direct manuring using livestock in the Sandlings may suggest that the arable area is understated by ploughzone archaeology in this period.
[685] Bruce Campbell has similarly suggested that areas of the landscape under the plough in the early fourteenth century would never again be cultivated. See Campbell, 'The Land', 183–84.
[686] Forster and Charles, 'Arable or Pasture?', 72.

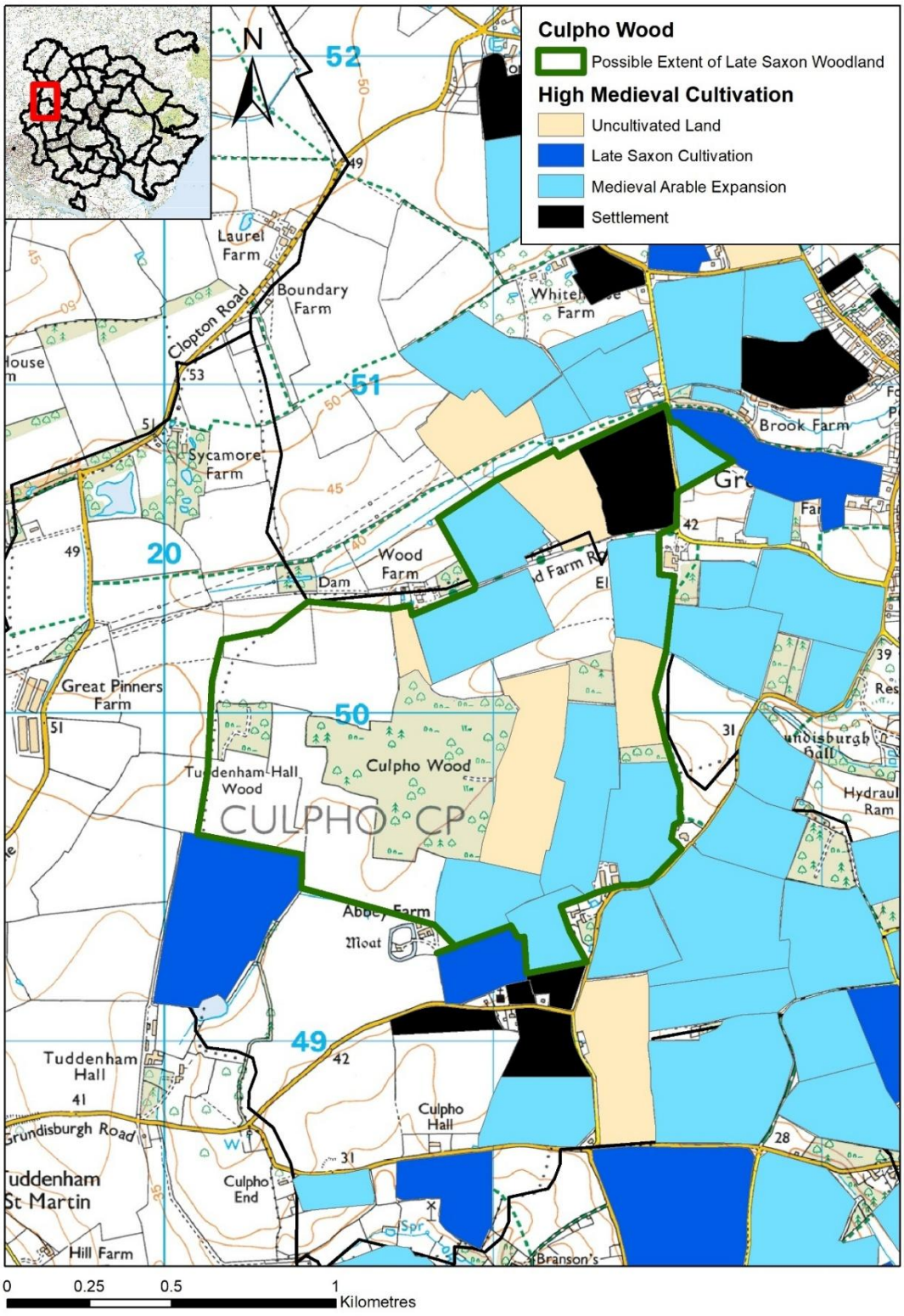

Figure 9.35: the expansion of cultivation in the area surrounding Culpho Wood, coterminous with the woodland being grubbed out and brought under the plough. It is clear that cultivation encroached on the area of woodland, significantly reducing the scale of woodland from its Late Saxon extent. Source: DVSA 10, 11, 17 and 34.

growing population may have *enabled* the intensification of arable farming, providing more labourers to undertake tasks such as weeding, manuring and ploughing.[687] The High Middle Ages also witnessed the expansion of towns and a coterminous increase in the non-agriculturally productive sector of society. This, along with the proliferation of markets, may have encouraged an increasing emphasis on cereal production to produce surpluses to trade at these economic centres.

The Chronology of High Medieval Arable Expansion

While it has been attested that the area under the plough dramatically increased in both the claylands and Sandlings, it has been posited above that common edge drift, as well as settlement expansion more widely, may have occurred later than many have suggested; the chronology of arable expansion may, therefore, similarly require reassessment. While the association between metalwork scatters and arable cultivation is relatively limited, particularly in the claylands, those ploughzone scatters that are apparent offer insight into the chronology of this extension in the area under the plough.

While some have argued for a rapid expansion of cultivation in the post-Conquest period, the evidence from the study area suggests that this may, as in earlier centuries, have been more protracted.[688] Metalwork manuring scatters recovered from both the claylands and the Sandlings suggest that the arable expansion of the Late Saxon period continued apace in the twelfth century, while spreads of metalwork from Hasketon, Sutton and Clopton attest the progressive extension of the arable area into the thirteenth,[689] although these scatters provide only a *terminus post quem* for this expansion of cultivation, rather than a secure date in which these landscapes began to be cultivated.[690]

While it has been demonstrated above that much of the High Middle Ages was characterised by a steady expansion of cultivation, there is some evidence to suggest that this ceased in the early decades of the fourteenth century, particularly in more marginal areas of the landscape, and indeed, some evidence of retrenchment is forthcoming. Although such notions should not be

[687] That the expansion of cultivation was coterminous with greater labour inputs goes against the assertions of Hamerow. See Hamerow, '"FeedSax"', 13–14.
[688] Hamerow, '"FeedSax"', 3–4.
[689] This chronology runs contrary to that posited by Gardiner, who suggested that arable farming rapidly expanded only in the later twelfth century. See Mark Gardiner, 'The Quantification of Assarted Land in Mid- and Late Twelfth-Century England', *The Haskins Society Journal* 21 (2010): 165–86.
[690] This chronology is congruent with that noted by Dyer in Christopher Dyer, *Peasants Making History: Living in an English Region 1200-1540* (Oxford University Press, 2022), 180–87.

overextended, only limited quantities of metalwork that can be dated to the period *c.* 1310-1350 have been recovered from the arable area, plausibly reflecting, at the very least, a deceleration in the pace of arable expansion, if not some degree of retrenchment, coterminous with the poor weather and droughts of the early fourteenth century. Indeed, fields which metalwork scatters suggest were under the plough in the later thirteenth century, particularly in more marginal environments, were seemingly abandoned at this date. Areas of interfluve cultivation in parishes such as Hollesley, Hasketon and Clopton, from which thirteenth-century metalwork has been recovered, were, for example, plausibly abandoned in the 1310s and 1320s, implying some degree of retrenchment due to the changing climate. Although it has been argued that the Black Death brought about 'a contraction in the area under cultivation, a slump in output, and the abandonment of some land under the plough', it is arguable that some of this retrenchment had already taken place in the early decades of the fourteenth century.[691]

Metalwork, Open Fields and Demesne

As suggested in Chapter Four, the medieval field systems of East Suffolk were complex, characterised by irregular open fields, 'block demesnes' and enclosed peasant land farmed in severalty in varying proportions. Indeed, the composition of arable land in any given vill was not static, with parcels of open field progressively enclosed while areas of waste were brought under the plough.

While ploughzone manuring scatters have been employed to understand the development of regular open field agriculture in the Midlands,[692] it has been demonstrated in Chapter Eight that Late Saxon irregular open fields cannot be differentiated from areas of peasant land held in severalty using scatters of pottery from the plough soil. Similar patterns are apparent in the High Middle Ages, with no variation in pottery scatters evident between areas of peasant land held in severalty and intermixed arable holdings. In Sutton, the High Medieval field systems of which have been mapped and analysed by Martin and Satchell, no variation in ceramic manuring scatters is apparent between areas of open field and 'block tenements', for example;[693] such evidence again suggests that irregular open fields cannot be securely identified in the ploughzone.

[691] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 205.
[692] Jones, 'Signatures', 184.
[693] Martin and Satchell, *Wheare Most Inclosures Be*, 131–39.

While the value of ploughzone archaeology in elucidating patterns of peasant landholding in East Suffolk appears limited, it has been posited in Chapter Two that demesne land, particularly contiguous blocks of demesne, can be identified in the ploughzone, marked by scatters of both pottery and metalwork. The High Middle Ages apparently witnessed a significant expansion of 'block demesne' in East Suffolk, although the impact of the greater archaeological visibility, particularly in terms of metalwork, of the late twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries must be acknowledged. Spreads of metalwork recovered from the arable landscape surrounding High Medieval settlement sites suggests a sizeable increase in the proportion of the landscape farmed as manorial demesne, or manured using waste from these sites at least. Some 208 hectares of High Medieval demesne are apparent in the study area, an increase of 89% from the Late Saxon period, perhaps the result of the subinfeudation of manorial holdings (Figures 9.35 and 9.36). As may be expected, the extent of this demesne, as well as the average size of demesne holdings, appears greatest in the Sandlings, with the area of demesne attested by metalwork scatters some 272% larger than in the claylands, coterminous with the

Figure 9.36: metalwork recorded with the PAS from demesne land. **Left –** SF-2E6AF6 copper alloy casket key. **Right –** SF-AD52F7 silver penny of Henry II. Images not to scale.

increased manorial power and disparities of wealth evident in these areas. Such patterns are repeated elsewhere in East Anglia, with large demesnes prevalent in areas of acid sand, such as Breckland, while smaller parcels of demesne land were more common in areas of fertile soil, such as the South Norfolk claylands and the Isle of Flegg.[694] Although patterns of demesne agriculture and landholding were not unchanging, that the environmentally structured variations in demesne size posited here are reflected in other sources lends weight to the interpretation of dense metalwork scatters from arable fields as evidence of demesne land.

[694] Campbell, 'Manorial Structure in Medieval Norfolk', 225–61.

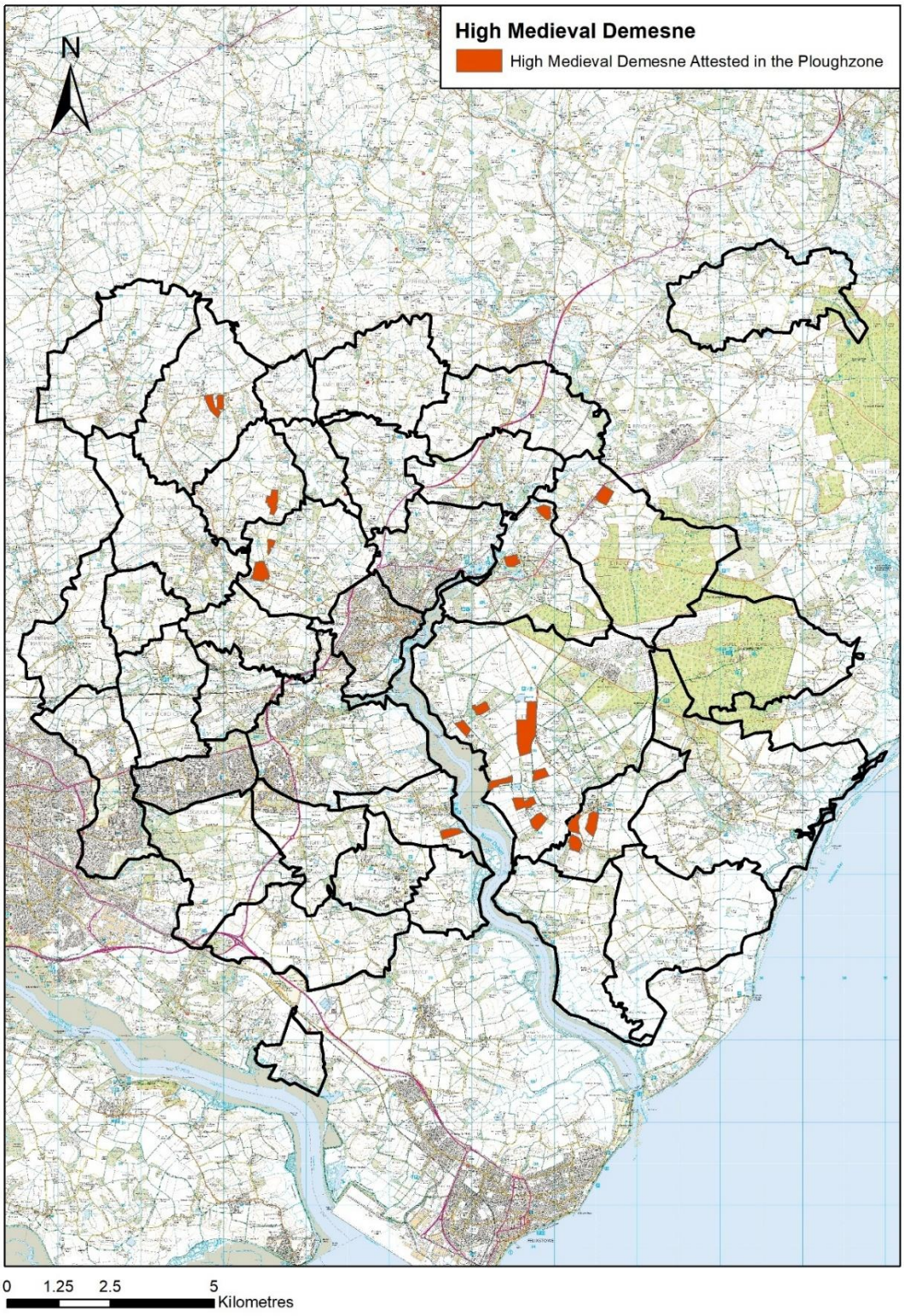

Figure 9.37: the distribution of High Medieval demesne land in the study area, as attested by scatters of pottery and metalwork in the plough soil. As expected, areas of demesne land were most significant in the Sandlings, coterminous with the increased manorial power in this landscape. Source: DVSA 1-37 and PAS.

High Medieval Livestock Farming

While significant arable expansion has been attested above, large areas remained unploughed, carrying heaths and woodland in the Sandlings, while the non-arable areas of the claylands were characterised by wood pasture, punctuated by more dense stands of trees. As many as 698 hectares of land were uncultivated in the High Middle Ages, representing some 14% of the countryside (Figures 9.37 and 9.38). This uncultivated land, largely left unploughed as it did not repay cultivation, was scattered across the interfluves, often distant from settlements, although small areas of riverine soils also remained uncultivated, perhaps due to issues of infertility or intractability. Indeed, it is likely that the extent of waste posited above underrepresents the true scale of grazing resources available to High Medieval farmers. Much of Newman's fieldwalking was carried out in river valleys, driven by modern patterns of non-arable land use in the uplands. It is in those areas avoided by Newman that tracts of unploughed land were likely to survive longest, owing to the infertility of the soils in the Sandlings, while the clay-covered interfluves were often waterlogged and difficult to cultivate. Hence, although the evidence of the study area implies the presence of tracts of unploughed ground, the total area of grazing resources available to medieval farmers was likely greater than this suggests. While many have focussed on arable agriculture in the High Middle Ages,[695] these grazing resources were central to the rural economy.[696] As in earlier periods, these areas of unploughed ground were exploited as grazing for livestock, particularly sheep in the Sandlings, while the wood pastures of the claylands provided grazing and fodder, especially leafy hay, for herds of cattle, the exploitation of which is attested by spreads of personal possessions such as buckles.[697]

[695] See, for example, Hall, *Open Fields*. Exceptions include the work of Dyer and Margetts. See Christopher Dyer, 'The Housing of Peasant Livestock in England, 1200–1520', *Agricultural History Review* 67 (2019): 29–50; Margetts, *Wandering Herd*.
[696] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 79–86.
[697] See, for example, PAS HAMP863, SF-F90112 and SF-0ABA87.

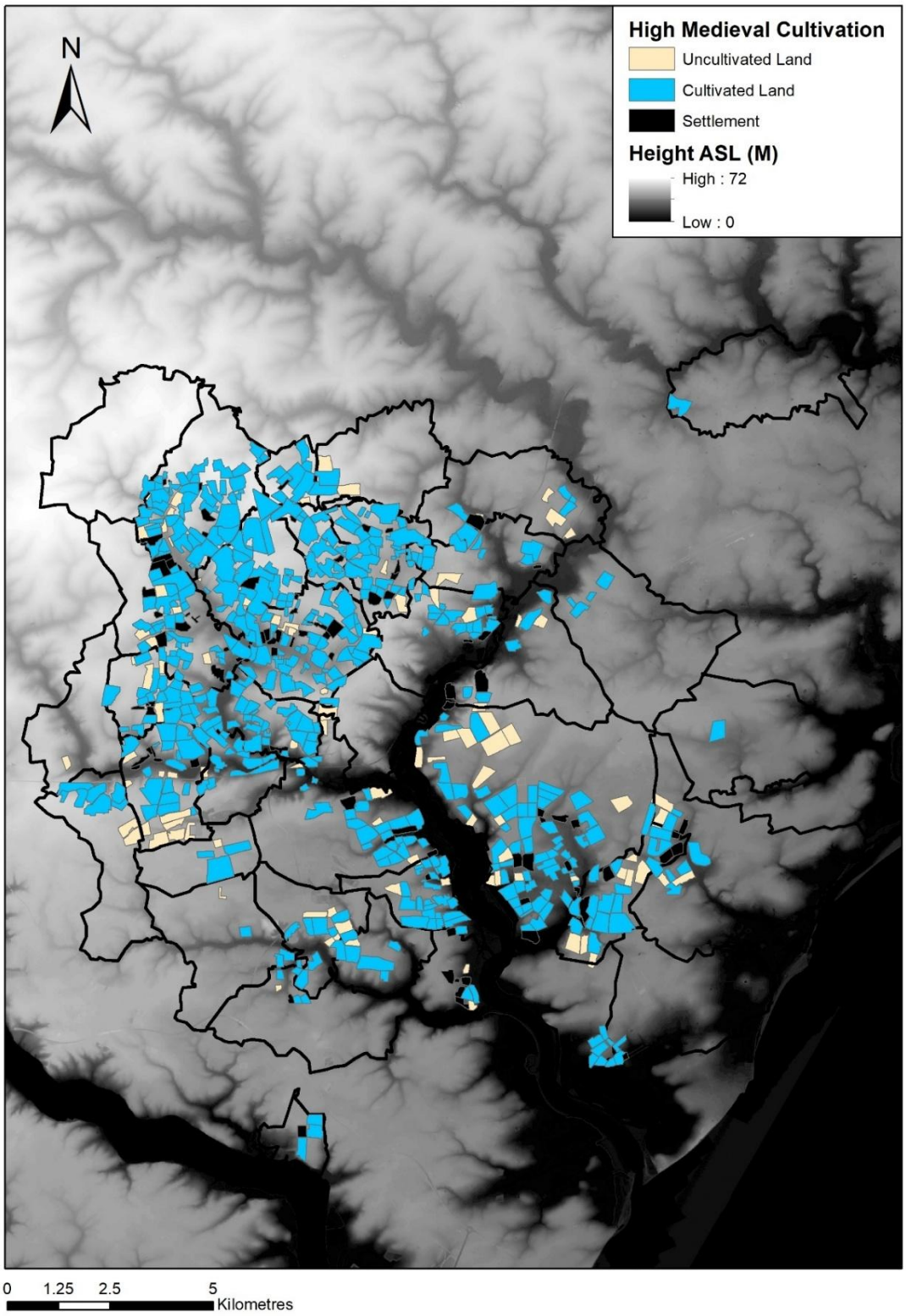

Figure 9.38: the extent of High Medieval cultivation in the study area. Although a dramatic expansion in the area under the plough is evident, parcels of land, particularly on the interfluves, remained unploughed. Source: DVSA 1-37.

Figure 9.39: SF-CB5342 High Medieval copper alloy buckle recovered from the interfluves in the Sandlings. Scatters of personal possessions such as this attest the exploitation of areas of infertile or intractable ground as grazing for herds of livestock. Image not to scale.

As in preceding periods, subregional variations in manuring strategies are again evident in High Medieval East Suffolk, indicative of differing livestock husbandry systems. The total area of intense ceramic manuring was some 45% larger in the claylands, for example, while the area of moderately intense manuring was 19% greater in areas of clay than sand.[698] These manuring scatters were also comprised of greater sherd densities in areas of heavy soil, with the density of pottery 16% larger in High Suffolk than the Sandlings. Indeed, initial examination of the distribution of manuring scatters in the study area suggests that the use of farmyard waste to restore fertility to arable fields was most prevalent in the claylands.

These variations imply the continuation of the environmentally structured patterns of livestock husbandry laid out throughout previous chapters. The claylands remained centred around cattle farming, with large herds grazed on the tattered remains of wood pasture and waste.[699] Such animals were stalled in yards both overnight as well as throughout the winter, fed on hay and branches lopped from trees.[700] When these cattle were stalled, their waste was assiduously collected and stored in heaps, becoming mixed with household refuse. The use of this material as manure for arable holdings engendered the formation of large ploughzone scatters. The stalling of cattle in barns and yards is widely attested in this period, with complex systems of livestock husbandry centred around housing cattle identified by Dyer.[701] Contemporary sources such as Walter of Henley's *Le Dite de Hosebondrie,* dealing with the management of a manor, also suggest that the stalling of cattle in sheds and yards was a widespread practice in the late

[698] Only 47% of area surveyed was in High Suffolk, suggesting that such patterns go beyond recovery bias.
[699] Oliver Creighton and Stephen Rippon, 'Conquest, Colonisation and the Countryside: Archaeology and the Mid-11th- to Mid-12th-Century Rural Landscape', in *The Archaeology of the 11th Century*, ed. Dawn Hadley and Christopher Dyer (Routledge, 2017).
[700] Martin Spray, 'Holly as a Fodder in England', *Agricultural History Review* 29 (1981): 97–110.
[701] Dyer, 'Housing of Peasant Livestock', 29–50.

thirteenth century,[702] while the anonymous author of *Seneschaucie* again refers to such practices.[703] Significantly, this association between cattle farming and High Suffolk is also manifested in demesne accounts. As Bailey has highlighted, demesne agricultural systems centred around cattle rearing could be found in the bosky claylands, while, although less well documented, peasant farmers in the claylands similarly exploited cattle for meat, manure and traction.[704]

While the claylands remained a landscape of cattle farming, the management of large flocks of sheep predominated in the Sandlings. As in previous periods, these flocks were grazed on heaths during the day before being folded on arable land at night, their dung becoming incorporated with the soil to restore fertility. Such 'sheep-corn husbandry' is well attested and has been the subject of much academic attention; these patterns of livestock management also find manifestation in contemporary documents. Each of those Suffolk demesnes on which large flocks of sheep could be found were located in Breckland and the Sandlings,[705] while references to fold-courses, were most prevalent in East Anglia in areas of acid sand, including the Sandlings.[706] That the occupational surname *Shepherd* is most common in areas of acid sand or chalk in the 1327 Lay Subsidy may be relevant in this context.

While, up to this point, a binary distinction between the livestock husbandry systems of the claylands and Sandlings has been posited, toponymic evidence muddies this otherwise clear pattern. The distribution of major and minor cattle place-names documented before the mid-fourteenth century matches the expected distribution, that is, these place-names are overwhelmingly found in the claylands where, as suggested throughout, large herds of cattle were routinely managed (Figure 9.39).[707] The outlying examples in the Sandlings, meanwhile, are associated with areas of riverine marsh, similarly suited to cattle farming. The long-term, environmentally structured patterns of livestock husbandry laid out in the foregoing chapters are, once again, corroborated by the evidence of place-names.

The distribution of ovine place-names is, however, much less clear. While many of these can, again, be found in those regions in which other sources suggest the presence of large flocks of sheep, such as Breckland and the chalk lands in the south and southwest of the county, a small number of place-names referring to sheep can be found in what is otherwise cattle country

[702] Walter of Henley discusses 'houses' for cattle in Lamond, *Husbandry*, 25.
[703] The anonymous author of *Seneschaucie* describes the 'cowhouse' in Lamond, *Husbandry*, 113.
[704] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 79–86.
[705] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 79–86.
[706] Belcher, *Foldcourse*, 13–22.
[707] These place-names derive from Briggs, *The Place-Names of Suffolk*.

(Figure 9.40). Such a pattern is superficially perplexing. While this may be a consequence of the environment of these places, it is noteworthy that large portions of these parishes were, at the time of Domesday, held by great ecclesiastical houses, particularly Bury St Edmunds and Ely, or as part of the Honour of Eye, suggesting that these sites that do not fit the patterns corroborated elsewhere may be the result of differing economic strategies of great lords.

Conclusion

The High Middle Ages were marked by an explosion of settlement, driven by increasing cultivation, with the landscape, in many respects, coming to resemble that of the later Roman period. This expansion in occupation resulted in the proliferation of farmsteads throughout the claylands while, in the Sandlings, settlements largely expanded *in situ* around water sources. The landscape of East Suffolk was open and exploited, more densely occupied than at any time before. Common edge settlement found its fullest expression in this period, coming to characterise the landscape of the claylands, with farmsteads in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries expanding to the edge of common grazing resources, the boundaries of which remained stable into the eighteenth century. The emergence of these sites scattered across the interfluves was the result of the expansion of occupation, rather than the wholesale movement of settlement as the term 'common edge drift' implies, however.

Arable expansion continued apace in the High Medieval period, with the area under the plough congruent with, and perhaps in some areas larger than, that of the eighteenth century. This expansion of cultivation was driven by, and indeed enabled, the demographic growth laid out above. Despite these radical changes in settlement and society, subregional variations in manuring strategies, mediated by the environment, persisted. While the claylands remained a landscape of cattle farming, the Sandlings were characterised by large flocks of sheep; such patterns are widely documented for the first time in the High Middle Ages. These environmentally structured variations in livestock husbandry plausibly underpinned the development of the landscape of East Suffolk, and, perhaps, England more widely, as will be discussed below.

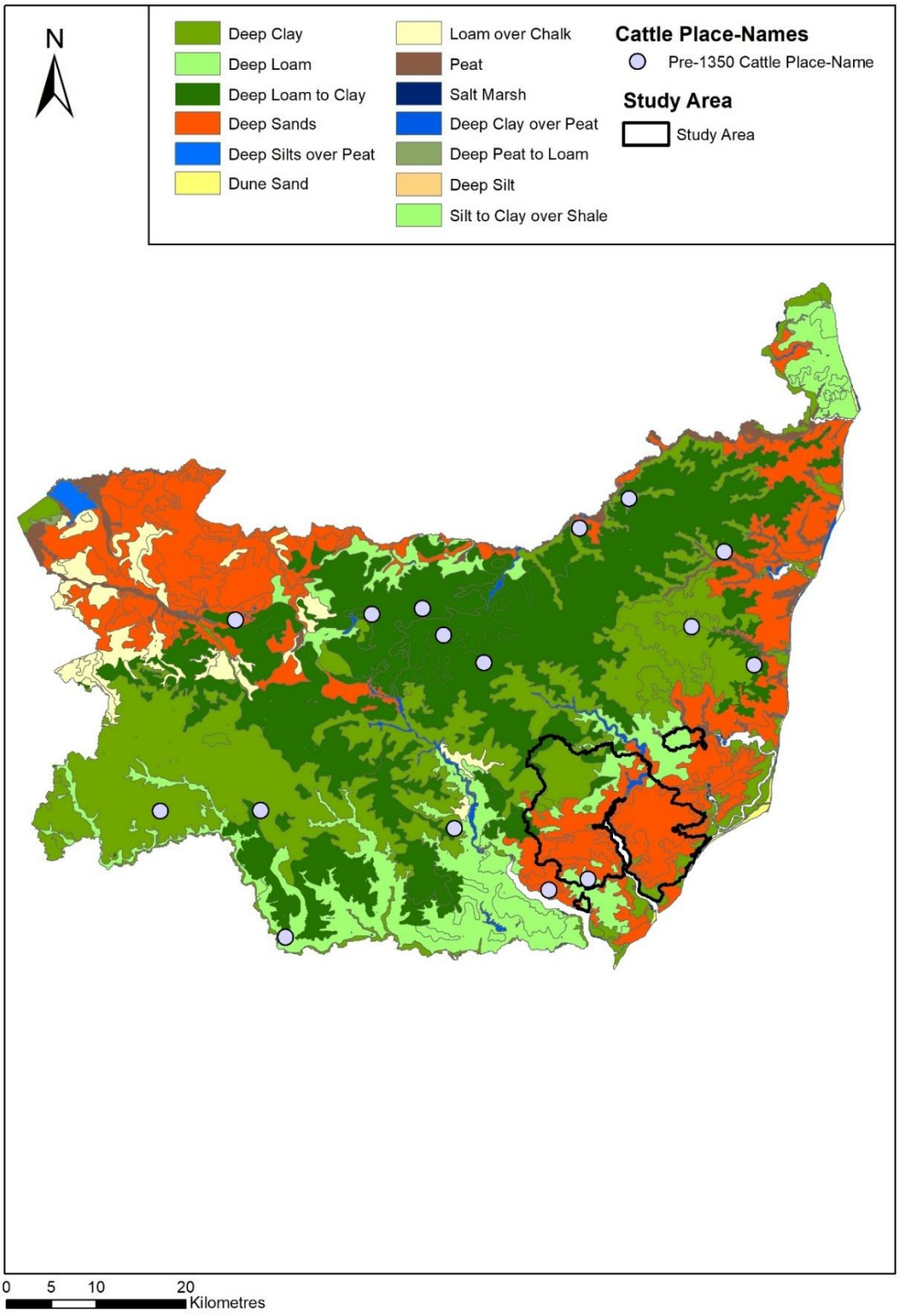

Figure 9.40: the distribution of place-names referring to cattle (including derivatives of cow, calf and bull) in Suffolk and their association with soils of the region (after Briggs, forthcoming). These names match the expected distribution, concentrated in areas of heavy soil. Those outlying names occur in regions of extensive meadows suited to the management of herds of cattle.

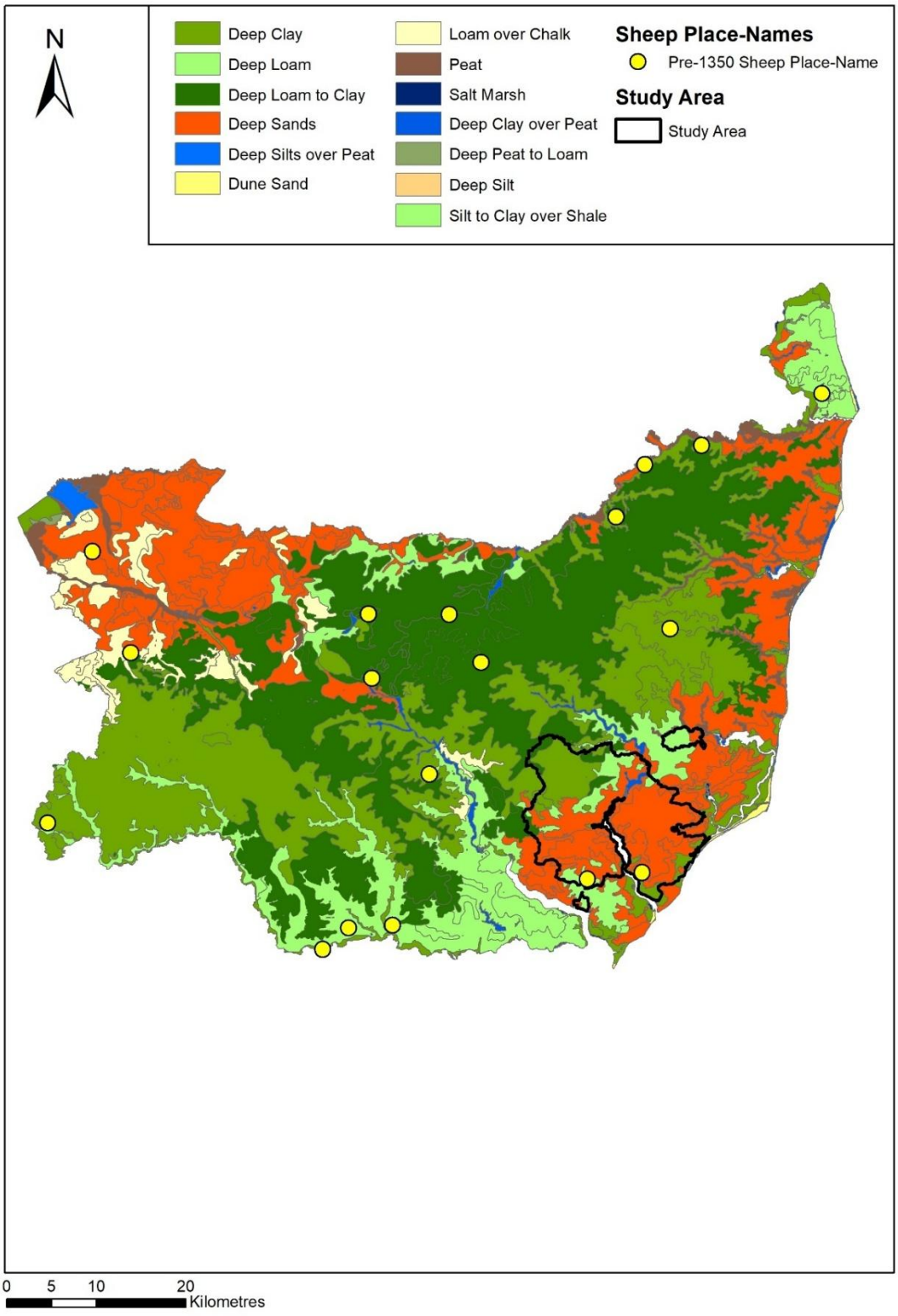

Figure 9.41: the distribution of place-names referring to sheep (including derivatives of sheep, ram, wither and lamb) in the study area and their association with the soils of the region (after Briggs, forthcoming). While many of these place-names do indeed occur in those areas of light, acid sands and chalks suited to the management of sheep, a number of outlying names are evident.

Chapter Ten: Soils, Stability and Settlement Change in East Suffolk

Throughout the previous chapters, an account of the development of the landscape of East Suffolk has been presented, based upon the evidence of scatters of pottery and metalwork recovered from the plough soil. Significant changes have been shown to have occurred in the countryside, with the settlement pattern and arable landscape, in particular, ebbing and flowing as East Suffolk was reshaped by generations of farmers and settlers. Yet, for all this reworking, long-term, environmentally structured patterns of continued exploitation can be found woven throughout the landscape; indeed, such structural factors resulted, in many ways, in the High Medieval countryside bearing a striking resemblance to that of the later Roman period. The following chapter takes a wider approach, interrogating these patterns of long-term continuity and change and their implications for understanding the development of the countryside of East Anglia, and indeed England, as a whole.

Settlement Nucleation, Dispersal and Water Access

Throughout previous chapters, the association between occupation sites and reliable water sources, particularly in the Sandlings, has been highlighted, with farmsteads fixed alongside rivers, streams and springs. In the claylands, meanwhile, settlements were often widely scattered throughout the countryside, occupying a diverse range of landscape contexts.

The importance of hydrology in structuring settlement patterns has largely been neglected.[708] Yet, viewed in the longer chronological context of this current study, it is clear that access to water was a major influence in structuring the settlement pattern of East Suffolk at a local level.

The clay soils of High Suffolk are frequently punctuated by permeable lenses of sands and gravels that serve to trap water between surrounding layers of clay;[709] in such landscapes, water was 'widely available from local aquifers'.[710] In the Sandlings, meanwhile, the sands and gravels, often overlying porous crag formations, present very few opportunities for water to be accessed except on the floor of the valley itself, at spring lines or in small bands of London clay in the estuaries.[711] These varied patterns of water access structured the location of settlement in the landscape. In areas in which water supplies were abundant, farmsteads spread widely

[708] Taylor, *Village and Farmstead*, 12. Williamson has, however, recently reasserted the importance of water access in structuring the development of villages in Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 184–93.
[709] For further analysis of the formation of aquifers and the relationship between geology and hydrology see Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 184–93.
[710] Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 187.
[711] Warner, *Origins*, 16.

throughout the countryside, fixed not only in river valleys but also expanding across the interfluves. In areas of restricted water supplies such as the Sandlings, however, settlement took on a much less dispersed form, huddling around rivers, streams, and springs from which water, for consumption both by the inhabitants of settlements as well as livestock, could be drawn. In such landscapes the upland plateau remained unsettled, with farmsteads remaining entirely riverine; again, the precise locations of farmsteads and settlement sites was underpinned by varied patterns of water access. Such patterns are also apparent in East Anglia more widely; in areas of abundant, dispersed water supplies, such as the claylands of South Norfolk, farmsteads were widely scattered throughout the countryside, while, in areas in which access to water was much more restricted, such as Breckland, settlements were largely huddled in the valleys of rivers and streams, as well as at spring lines.[712]

Up to this point, a binary distinction between clustered riverine settlements in the Sandlings and dispersed farmsteads scattered throughout the landscape has been posited, owing to varied patterns of water access. At a local level, however, the settlement pattern of East Suffolk, and the environmental forces that have sculpted it, are more complex. A cursory examination of the modern settlement pattern in the Sandlings reveals that, in some areas, settlement took on a more dispersed form. Although metalwork evidence suggests that this dispersal did not find full manifestation until the Late Middle Ages at the earliest, it is worthwhile to interrogate the factors underpinning such settlement change here. In Ramsholt, settlement spread throughout the parish, leaving the parish church standing alone amongst fields and heath, while in Brightwell and Newbourne, the small number of farmsteads shown on nineteenth-century maps were similarly dispersed (Figure 10.1). Although it has been suggested that the patterns of water supply in the Sandlings restricted the expansion of farmsteads throughout the countryside, it is arguable that the dispersal of settlement in these parishes was similarly the result of water access, that is, the presence of large numbers of springs at the junction of soils. Each of those Sandlings parishes in which dispersed settlements could be found were marked by numerous,

[712] Compare patterns of water access in Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 192. with patterns of settlement nucleation and dispersal in Roberts and Wrathmell, *Region and Place*, 9.

widely distributed springs or patches of London Clay. It is alongside these water sources that settlement sites, including those shown on nineteenth-century maps, were located. While the limited supplies of water in many areas of the Sandlings encouraged settlement to remain centred around rivers, streams and springs, in parishes where widely spread water sources are apparent, settlement took on a similarly dispersed form. Such evidence suggests that, at a local level, the availability of water supplies was a prime factor in influencing settlement location.

Figure 10.1: Ramsholt church, once surrounded by settlement, standing alone among fields and heath. Each of those farmsteads currently occupied in the parish are huddled alongside springs and patches of London clay from which water could be drawn. Image reproduced by kind permission of John Fielding. © John Fielding.

Water Access and Settlement Forms

While it has been posited above that the varied water supplies of the study area structured the patterns of settlement in East Suffolk and, perhaps, East Anglia more widely, the varied availability of water structured subregional variations in settlement forms in periods of high population, particularly in the later Roman period and High Middle Ages. While settlements situated alongside rivers and streams could be found in the claylands, later Roman and High Medieval farmsteads were flung throughout the countryside, including across the interfluves (Figure 10.2). Indeed, the settlement pattern of the High Middle Ages resembles, in many

respects, that of the third and fourth centuries (compare Figures 10.3 and 10.4). This dispersal was, as suggested above, enabled by the widely available water supplies in such areas, with settlement expanding across the landscape in times of demographic growth to accommodate the relatively high population, although a proportion of these later Roman farmsteads in the uplands may have been occupied only seasonally. In the Sandlings, however, reliable supplies of water were restricted to rivers, streams and springs, as well as minor aquifers in bands of estuarine London Clay. In times of demographic growth, the expanding population could not be accommodated through the expansion of farmsteads throughout the countryside in a manner akin to the claylands. Instead, settlements largely expanded *in situ*, developing into sprawling agglomerations of farmsteads, scattered alongside rivers, streams and springs from which reliable supplies of water could be drawn (Figure 10.5). Similar patterns are evident in other areas of East Anglia characterised by limited water supplies, such as Breckland, with nucleations of farmsteads again strung alongside rivers and streams from which reliable supplies of water could be drawn, albeit less tightly nucleated than their Midlands counterparts. Such evidence again suggests that varied patterns of water access played a key role in structuring the development of the countryside.

The evidence laid out above, therefore, further develops Williamson's 'hydrology hypothesis'.[713] While Williamson has correctly suggested that the development of nucleated villages and intermixed arable holdings can be correlated with those areas in which water supplies were restricted, the evidence from East Suffolk both reinforces that nucleated settlements may have emerged in response to *in situ* expansion due to limited water supplies but also highlights that the precise location of settlement in all landscapes was, to some degree, structured by patterns of hydrology and topography. While such factors have long been underplayed in historiographical tradition, varied patterns of hydrology structured both the location and form of settlement in East Suffolk at a local level.

[713] Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 184–93.

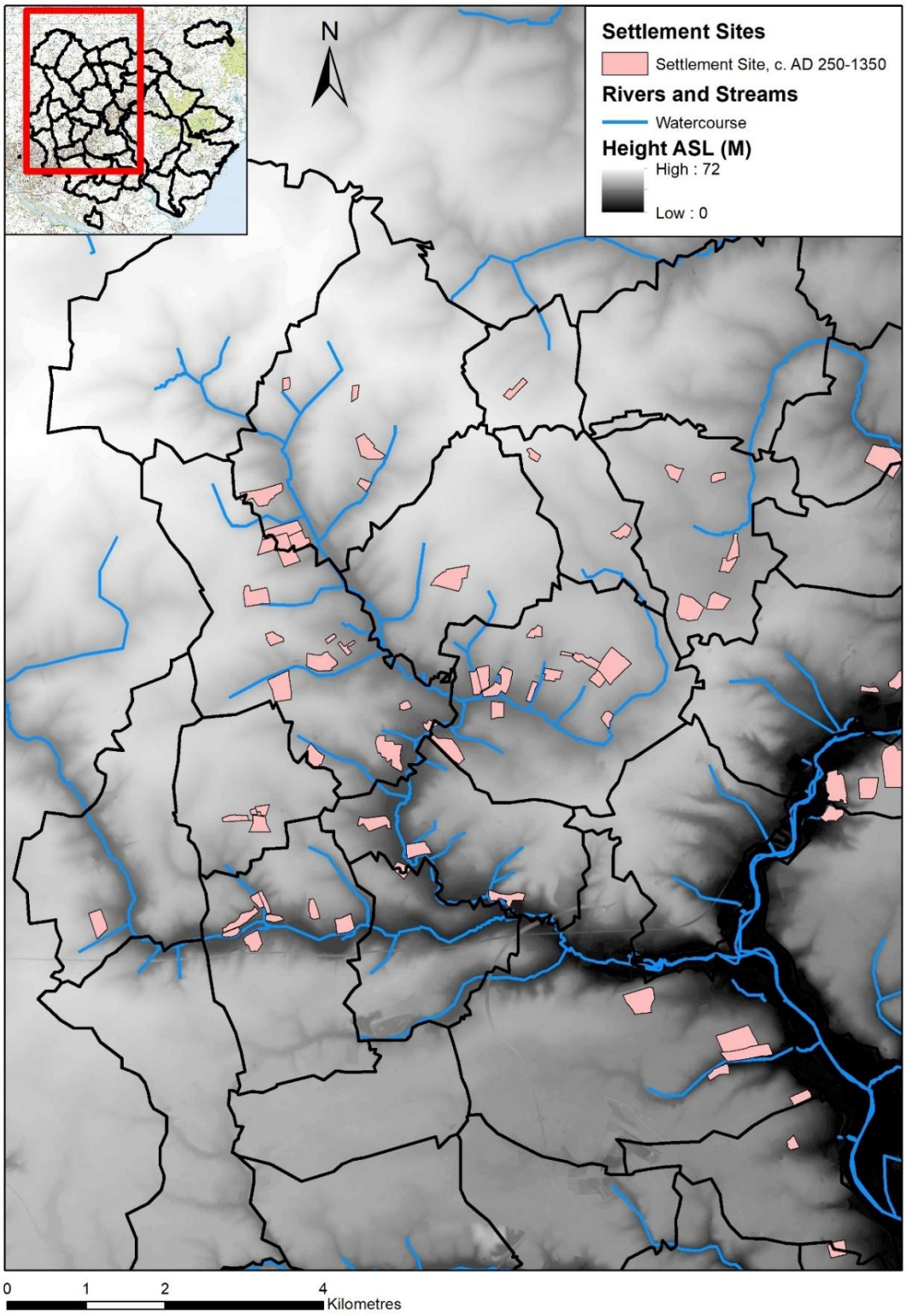

Figure 10.2: All sites occupied in the period *c*. AD 250-1350 in the claylands and their association with watercourses and topography. It is clear that settlement in High Suffolk occupied a diverse range of environmental contexts owing to the abundance of water supplies in the region. Source: DVSA 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 33, 34, 35 and 37.

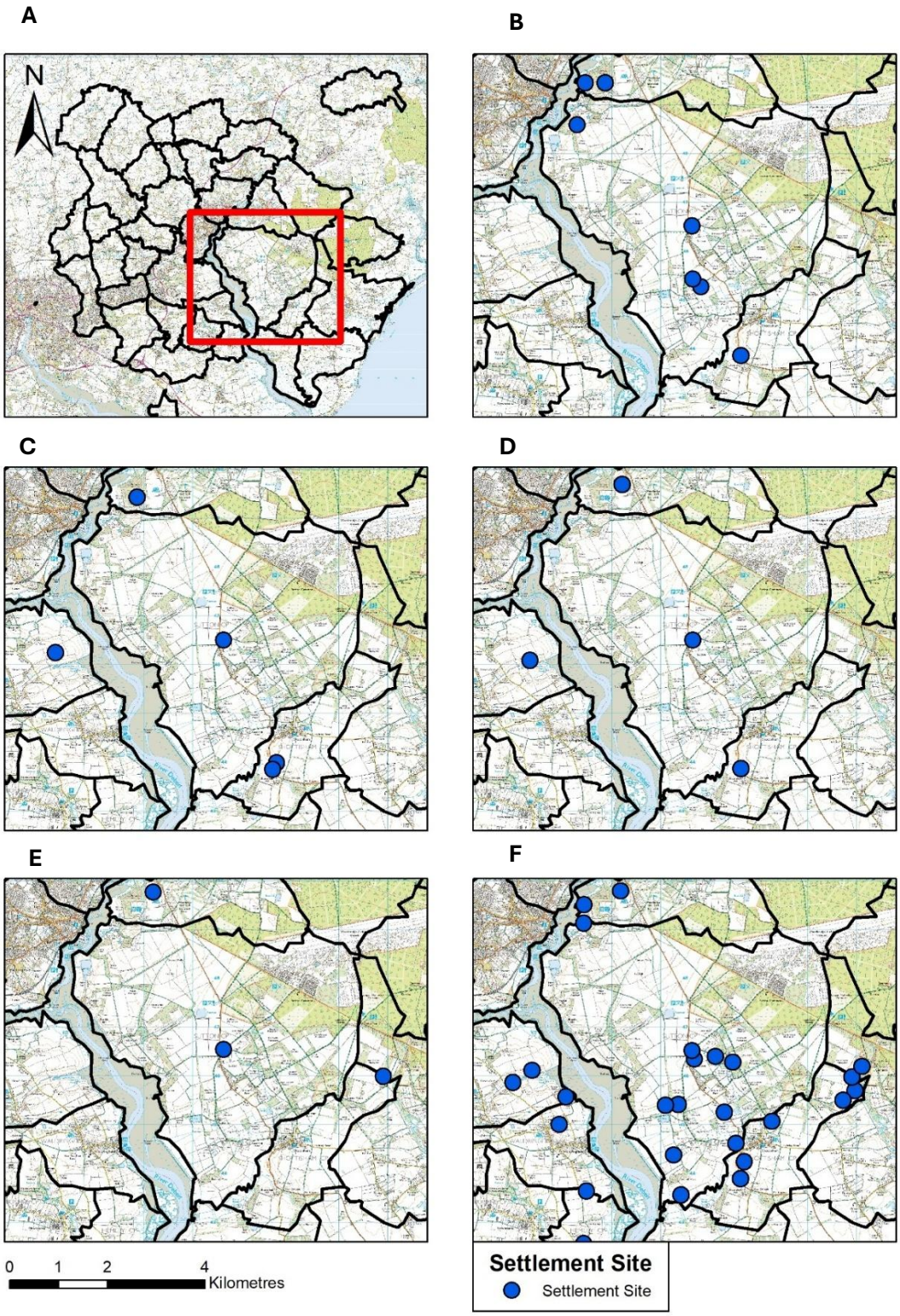

Figure 10.3: the patterns of settlement change in Sutton. **A:** the location of Sutton. **B:** later Roman settlement. **C:** Early Saxon Settlement. **D:** Middle Saxon settlement. **E:** Late Saxon settlement. **F:** High Medieval settlement. Source: DVSA 1, 5, 6, 19, 20, 23, 29, 33, 36 and 37.

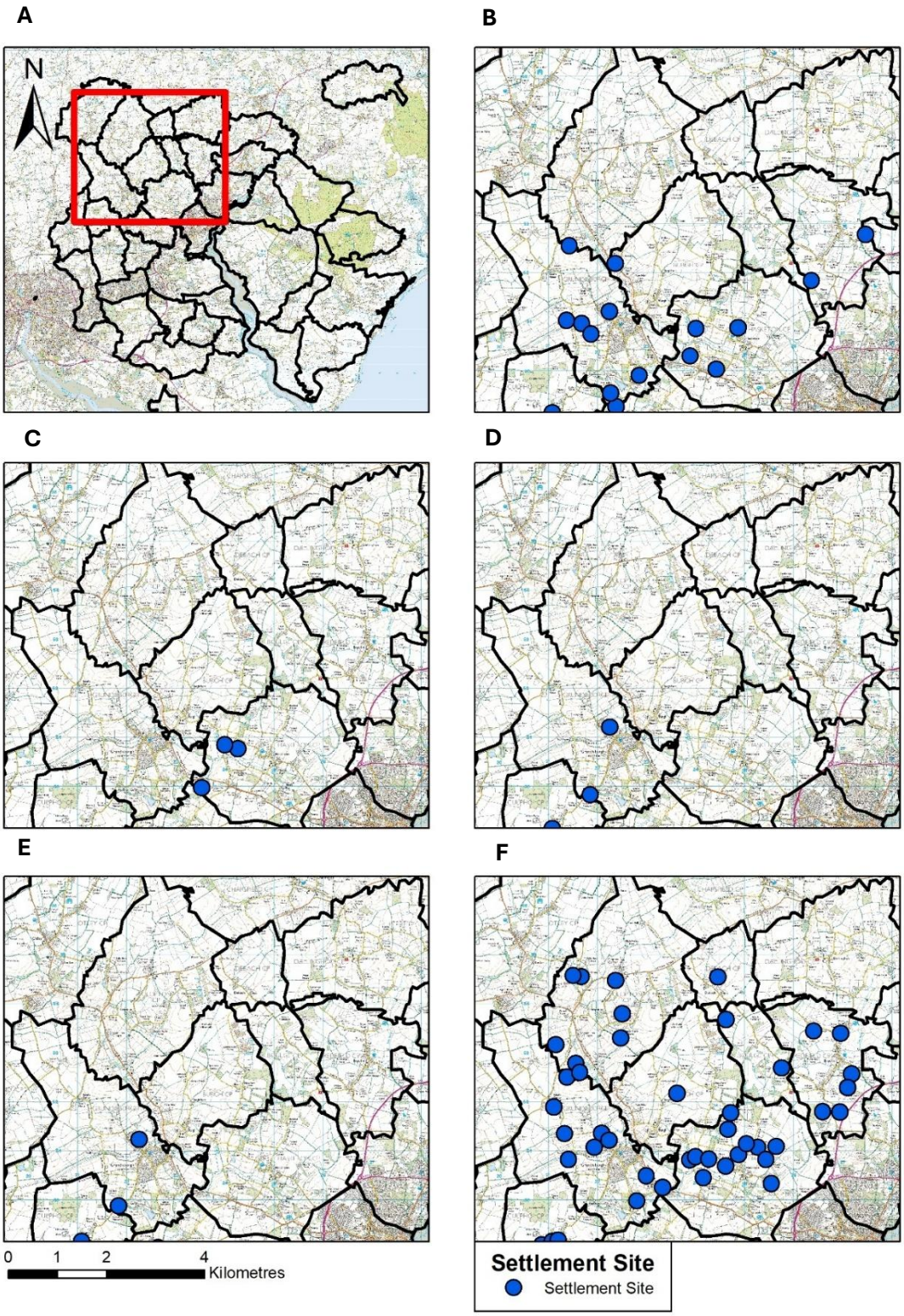

Figure 10.4: the patterns of settlement change in the claylands. **A:** the location of Grundisburgh and Burgh. **B:** later Roman settlement. **C:** Early Saxon Settlement. **D:** Middle Saxon settlement. **E:** Late Saxon settlement. **F:** High Medieval settlement. Source: DVSA 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 26, 30, 34 and 37.

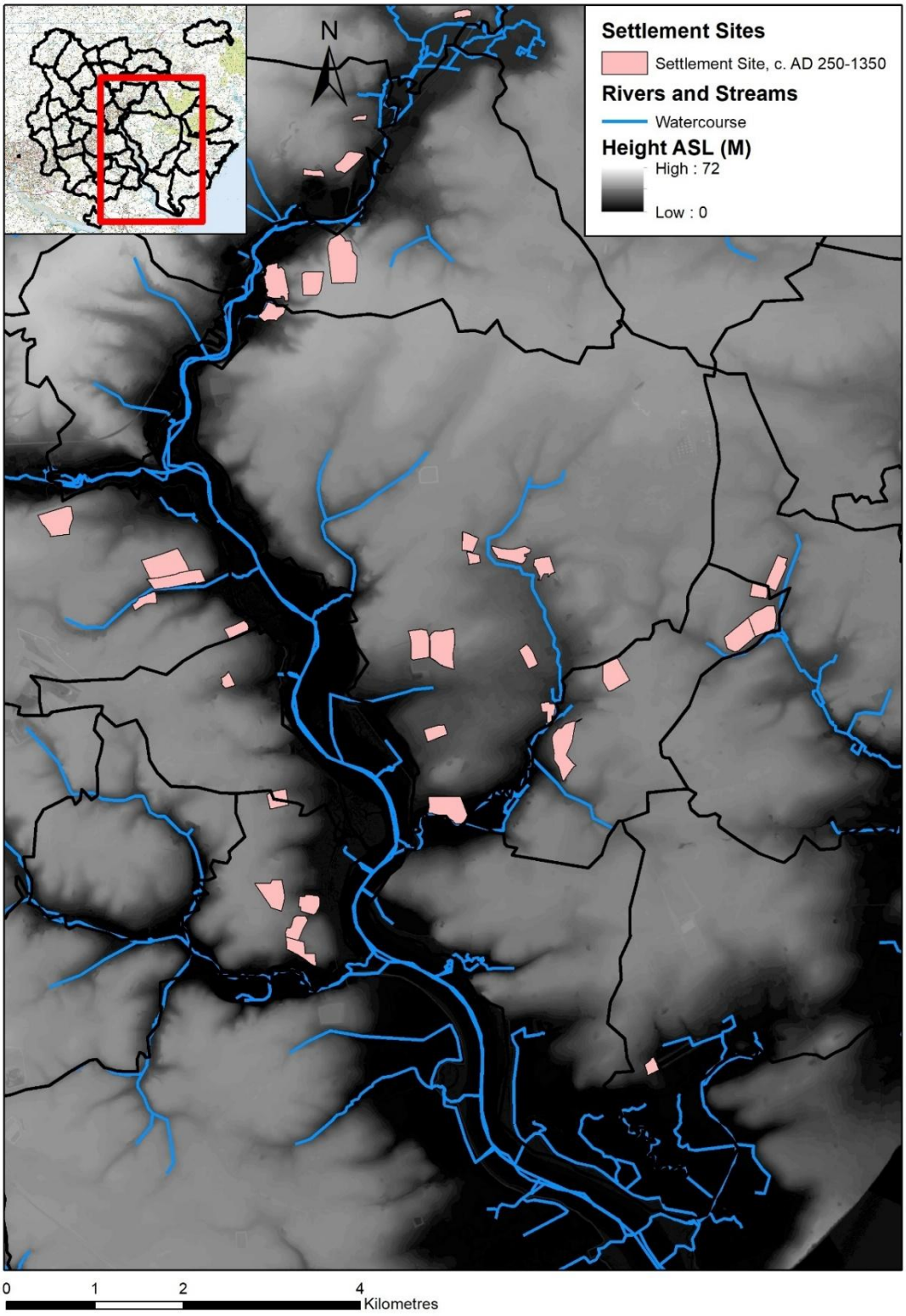

Figure 10.5: All sites occupied in the period *c.* AD 250-1350 in the Sandlings and their association with watercourses and topography. The distribution of occupation sites in areas of acid sand was much more limited than in the claylands, with farmsteads huddling around rivers and streams, as well as patches of London clay from which water could be drawn. Source: DVSA 1, 5, 6, 19, 20, 23, 24, 29, 33, 35, 36 and 37.

Water Access and Settlement Continuity

It was posited in Chapter Five that there is, in many cases, a recurrent association between later Roman occupation sites and High Medieval settlements, particularly in the Sandlings, with some 65% of later Roman sites associated with Late Saxon and High Medieval occupation, such as at Shottisham Hall, Sutton Hall, and Playford Church (Figure 10.6). Metalwork scatters from the study area more widely suggests similar continuity, with the Domesday vill of Peyton in Ramsholt, for example, associated with a dense concentration of later Roman metalwork, while the currently occupied settlement core of Alderton is also surrounded by a sizeable spread of metalwork attesting the presence of later Roman activity.

At first glance, this association is difficult to reconcile, particularly when it is considered that the vast majority of sites associated with later settlement show no evidence of occupation in the intervening centuries. This lack of settlement in the Early and Middle Saxon period may, however, result from issues of recovery, as opposed to any real historic pattern. Scatters of Early and Middle Saxon pottery are often limited, both spatially and in number, while spreads of metalwork can be similarly restricted. It is possible, therefore, that these minor scatters, covering small areas and comprised of few artefacts, may remain out of reach of fieldwalking and metal detecting beneath gardens and non-arable land-use surrounding currently occupied High Medieval manorial sites. Churchyards may also serve to mask scatters of Early and Middle Saxon material that denote continued occupation from the later Roman centuries to the post-conquest period. The recovery of Early and Middle Saxon material from churchyards during the digging of graves may be relevant in this context, with Early Saxon cremation burials excavated from the churchyard at Waldringfield and Ipswich Ware recovered from Sutton churchyard raising the possibility that much Early and Middle Saxon settlement debris is obscured by non-arable land use.[714] While it can be suggested that the association between later Roman settlement and Late Saxon and High Medieval sites is the result of the reoccupation of favourable environmental contexts, it is possible that occupation continued from the later Roman period to the High Middle Ages in some areas, evidence for which lies buried beneath non-arable land-use where it cannot be recovered by ploughzone archaeological techniques. While such patterns are present in the claylands, such as at Burgh and Culpho, the association between later Roman settlements and High Medieval occupation is most prevalent in the Sandlings; such patterns remain to be explained.

[714] Stanley West, *A Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Material from Suffolk* (East Anglian Archaeology, 1998), 97,101.

It has been suggested above that the limited water supplies of the Sandlings may have played an important role in structuring patterns of settlement; it is arguable that such environmental factors also underpinned the recurrent association between later Roman farmsteads and High Medieval occupation. As suggested above, the Sandlings are characterised by relatively limited water supplies, with water only available from rivers and streams, bands of London clay in major estuaries, and springs at the junction between soils. In the claylands, meanwhile, water is widely available from shallow underground aquifers, as well as from the numerous rivers and streams that cross the landscape. The patterns of settlement continuity in the Sandlings may, therefore, reflect the limited number of viable locations for occupation, with similar environmental contexts both remaining occupied throughout the entire period here interrogated or repeatedly settled after short periods of abandonment. In the claylands, meanwhile, a wider suite of locations viable for settlement were present, enabling the greater movement of farmsteads throughout the countryside; in such circumstances, the continued occupation or reoccupation of antecedent settlement sites was less necessary. It may, in this context, be significant that test pitting in currently occupied settlements in East Anglia has recovered Roman pottery in areas of limited water supplies, such as the Sandlings, Breckland and southwest Suffolk, while areas such as the claylands of Suffolk and South Norfolk are marked by a distinct paucity of Roman material within later settlement areas.[715] Such evidence again suggests that patterns of settlement were structured by the availability of water, with the limited water supplies of the Sandlings restricting settlement change.

[715] See Lewis, 'A Thousand Years of Change', 29–30.

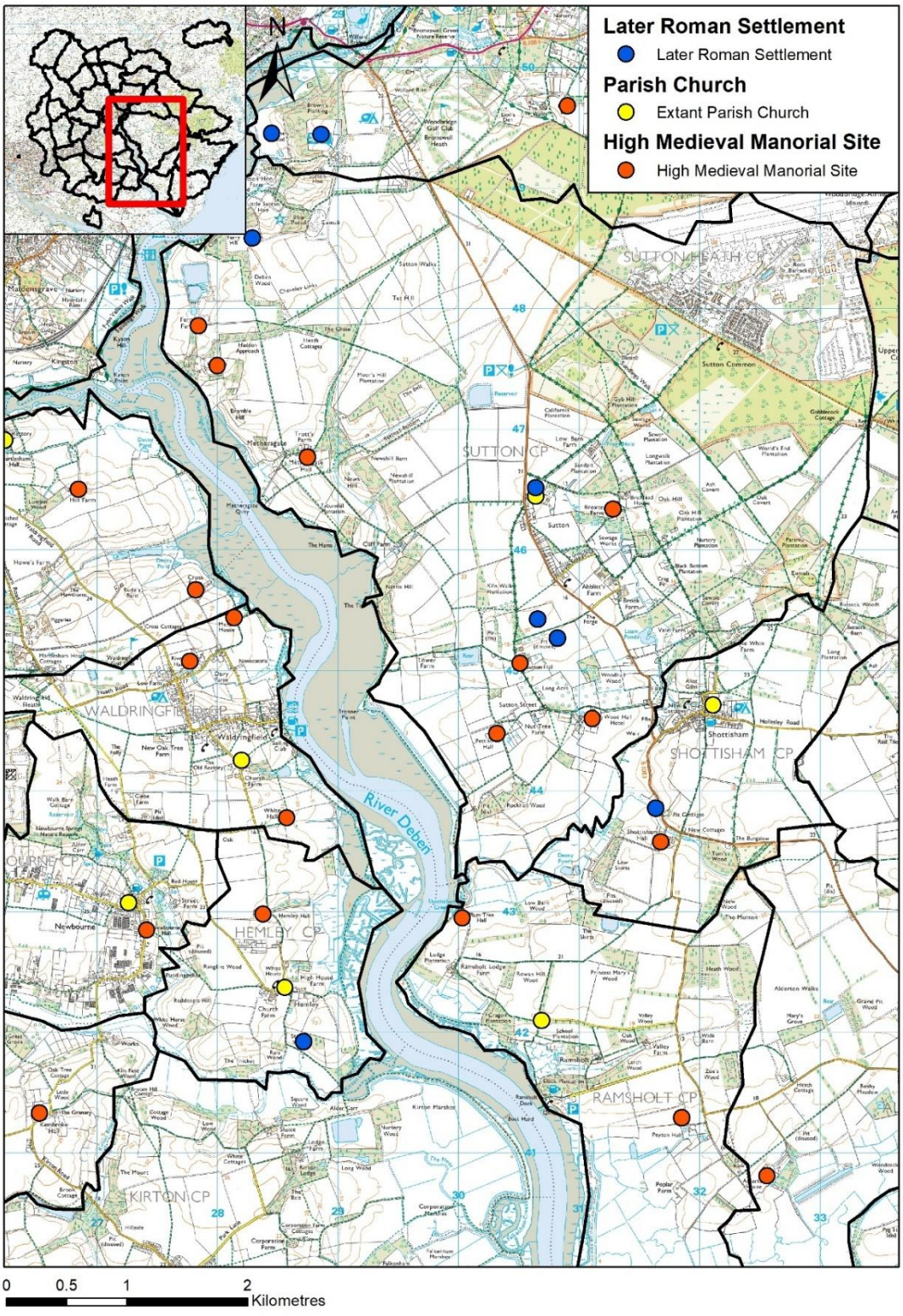

Figure 10.6: the later Roman settlement pattern in the Sutton and surrounding parishes and its association with later manorial sites and parish churches. Source: DVSA 1, 5, 6, 19, 20, 23, 24, 29, 33, 35, 36 and 37.

Soils and Social Differentiation

As suggested in Chapter Four, the development of social differentiation has been the subject of much debate, particularly in the context of the development of Late Saxon and High Medieval manors. Some have suggested that the development of widespread social differentiation was 'top down', that is, implanted into the landscape at the dictate of national and regional elites;[716] similar patterns have been posited for the development of villa estates in the later Roman period.[717] Others, however, have suggested that the emergence of widespread social hierarchies at a local level may have occurred as a result of long-term patterns of social differentiation among the peasantry, with poor members of local society entering bonds of service with wealthier neighbours in return for food in times of dearth. While proponents of the 'top down' model imply that this social polarisation emerged uniformly throughout the countryside, national variations in peasant freedom associated with the environment, namely climate, in the Late Saxon and High Medieval periods have been posited.[718] Those areas characterised by a benign climate suited to arable farming are demarcated by a relatively free population, owing to the viability of small farms and limited risk of harvest failure in such areas, with sufficient food reliably produced from relatively minor landholdings. In areas poorly suited to arable farming, meanwhile, large numbers of unfree peasants are apparent due to the greater prevalence of harvest failure and dearth, circumstances which may encourage or enforce bonds of servitude in return for sustenance. As Williamson has suggested, in areas of 'more challenging agricultural conditions … there was thus a greater likelihood that small landowners would end up in difficulties', forced to sell off land to survive, becoming reduced to servitude and dependence upon other members of local society.[719]

Throughout preceding chapters, long-term, environmentally structured patterns of social differentiation have been highlighted, manifested in the varied scale and composition of metalwork scatters between the Sandlings and the claylands. Although the Early Saxon period goes against such patterns, metalwork scatters in the Sandlings are, on the whole, larger than those in the claylands, implying the presence of significant wealth in areas of acid sand. This wealth was not, however, evenly distributed, with this landscape of elite centres punctuated by relatively impoverished settlements, likely tied to and dependent on nearby high-status residences. While metalwork scatters, and cropmark evidence, suggest the presence of a

[716] Jones, 'Multiple Estates', 9–34.
[717] Smith, 'The East', 241.
[718] Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 121–24.
[719] Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 123.

number of elite sites in later Roman Sutton, including a small villa, for example, these were interspersed with low status farmsteads, such as that lying adjacent to the parish church. Similarly, High Medieval activity in the same parish was marked by a number of elite sites, such as that associated with Sutton Hall, while other nearby settlements appear of much lower status. The social structures of the Sandlings appear, on the whole, strongly hierarchical and stratified.

The claylands, meanwhile, appear a much less differentiated landscape, marked only by small, widely distributed spreads of metalwork in the plough soil, implying the presence of a moderately wealthy peasantry. In later Roman Tuddenham and Hasketon, for example, numerous limited metalwork scatters are apparent, likely demarcating the farmsteads of peasant proprietors, while the High Medieval metalwork scatters of parishes such as Grundisburgh and Dallinghoo were similarly small and widely scattered, again implying the presence of owner-occupiers each farming a small holding. This is not, however, to suggest that the claylands were entirely undifferentiated. Small scatters of metalwork, including limited numbers of elite indicators, suggest that some farmers were more prosperous than their neighbours. Yet, this social polarisation, as attested in the ploughzone at least, appears both less marked and more widely distributed than in those areas lying to the east.

Significantly, such subregional variations in social structure are apparent, and indeed more visible, in the post-medieval period. The post-medieval landscape of the Sandlings was differentiated to a greater degree than the claylands, characterised by numerous small country houses and landed estates, such as in Ufford, as well as in nearby Sudbourne and Benhall, although it must be noted that these were relatively minor on a national scale. While these residences imply the presence of a wealthy, elite class, the land of such estates was settled and cultivated by tenant farmers and labourers. The claylands, meanwhile, remained a landscape of moderately wealthy owner-occupiers until a relatively late date, each farming a smallholding. Again, this was not an entirely undifferentiated countryside; the presence of minor estates such as that at Boulge attest some degree of social polarisation, yet this was more limited and less pervasive than in the Sandlings. As Richard Blome noted in 1673, 'High Suffolk … is chiefly the seat of the Yeomanry, few being there either very rich or very poor' while in the Sandlings, 'the Gentry are commonly seated'.[720]

Indeed, these environmentally structured subregional variations in social differentiation occur throughout East Anglia more widely; such patterns are again most evident in the distribution of post-medieval landed estates. Large estates holding the majority of land in single or multiple

[720] Richard Blome, *Britannia* (Thomas Roycroft, 1673), 208.

parishes, and the hierarchical societies these imply, were most prevalent in areas of acid sand, such as Breckland. In areas of fertile soil, such as the claylands of High Suffolk, these landholding units were comparatively rare, the land instead cultivated by a plethora of small farmers and peasant proprietors (Figure 10.7);[721] again, social differentiation was more prevalent and pervasive in areas of infertile soil. While the mansions and parks of the post-medieval elite are the most evident manifestation of this social differentiation, these sub-regional patterns of landholding were also expressed more subtly in the East Anglian countryside. As noted in Chapter Four, for example, vills characterised by unified manorial structures were, in the Late Saxon period and High Middle Ages, widespread in areas of infertile soils, while more agriculturally viable landscapes, such as the Isle of Flegg, were marked by numerous small manors and wealthy freemen.[722] The distribution of Roman villas is similarly telling. These elite centres were most prevalent, again, in or on the margins of areas of poor soils, such as Breckland and the Fens, as well as the chalklands of southwest Suffolk (Figure 10.8).[723] The distribution of non-numismatic Roman gold artefacts recorded with the PAS is remarkably similar, with such objects notably absent from the great arc of clay running through the centre of East Anglia, while coin hoards of the Late Saxon period are similarly largely restricted to areas of infertile soils (Figure 10.9).[724] Again, evidence of social differentiation, especially as manifested in the ploughzone, is most prevalent in areas of poor, infertile soil.

[721] Susanna Wade Martins and Tom Williamson, *Roots of Change: Farming and the Landscape in East Anglia, c.1700-1870* (British Agricultural History Society, 1999), 76–79.
[722] Campbell, 'Manorial Structure in Medieval Norfolk', 225–61.
[723] See Davies, *The Land of Boudica*, 189; Williamson, *Origins of Norfolk*, 44. Smith has also noted the prevalence of aisled barns and corn drying structures in Breckland, suggesting that large agricultural surpluses were gathered here, further implying the presence of elite estates appropriating and controlling agricultural production. See Smith, 'The East', 236.
[724] See, for example, PAS NMS-90F486, SF9809 and SF-3AFD83.

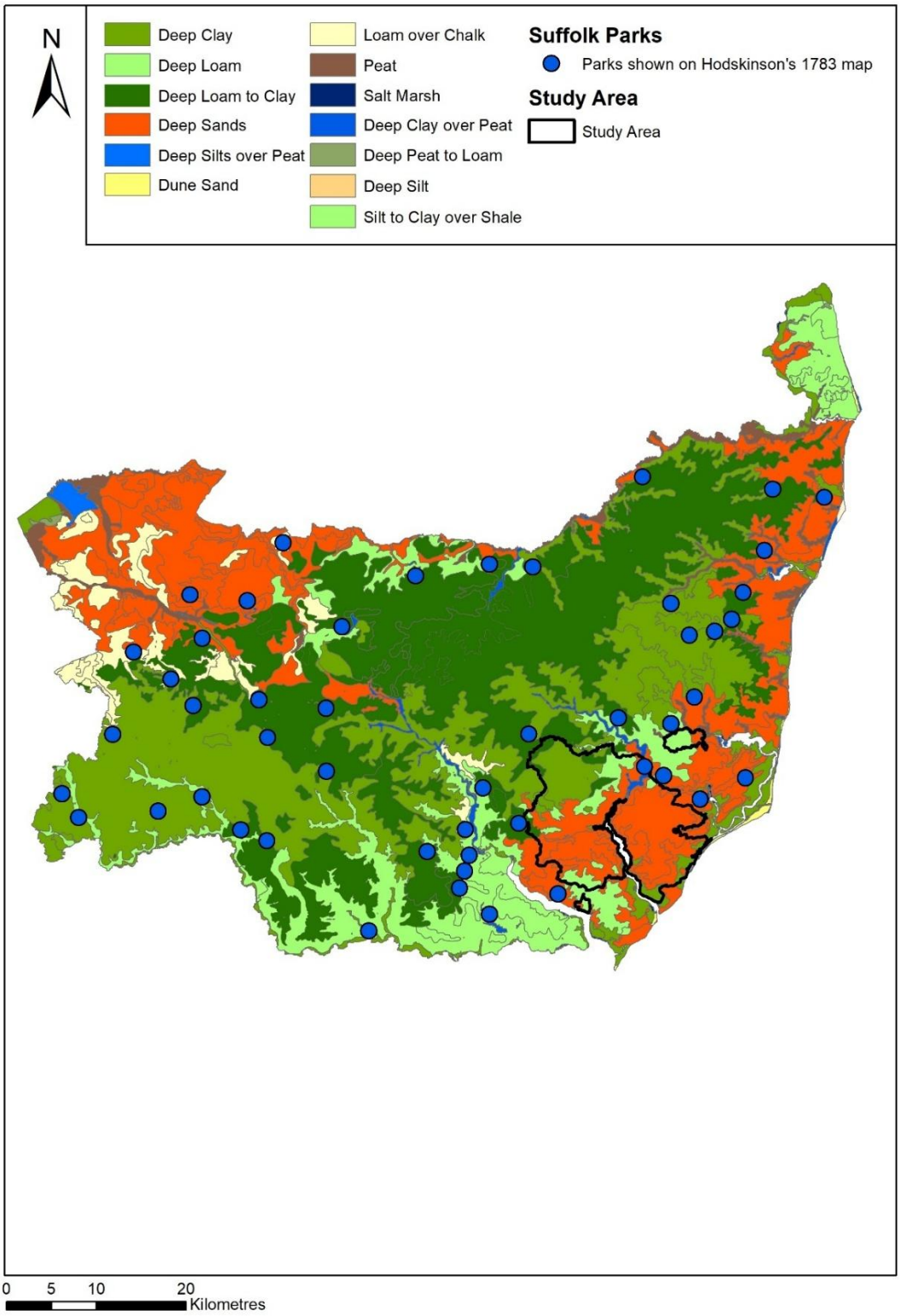

Figure 10.7: Suffolk parks as depicted on Hodskinson's 1783 map of Suffolk (after Hodskinson, 2003). Post-medieval parks, and the coterminous hierarchical structure they imply, are overwhelmingly clustered on or at the margins of areas of poor soil, with few situated on the band of clay that runs through the centre of the county.

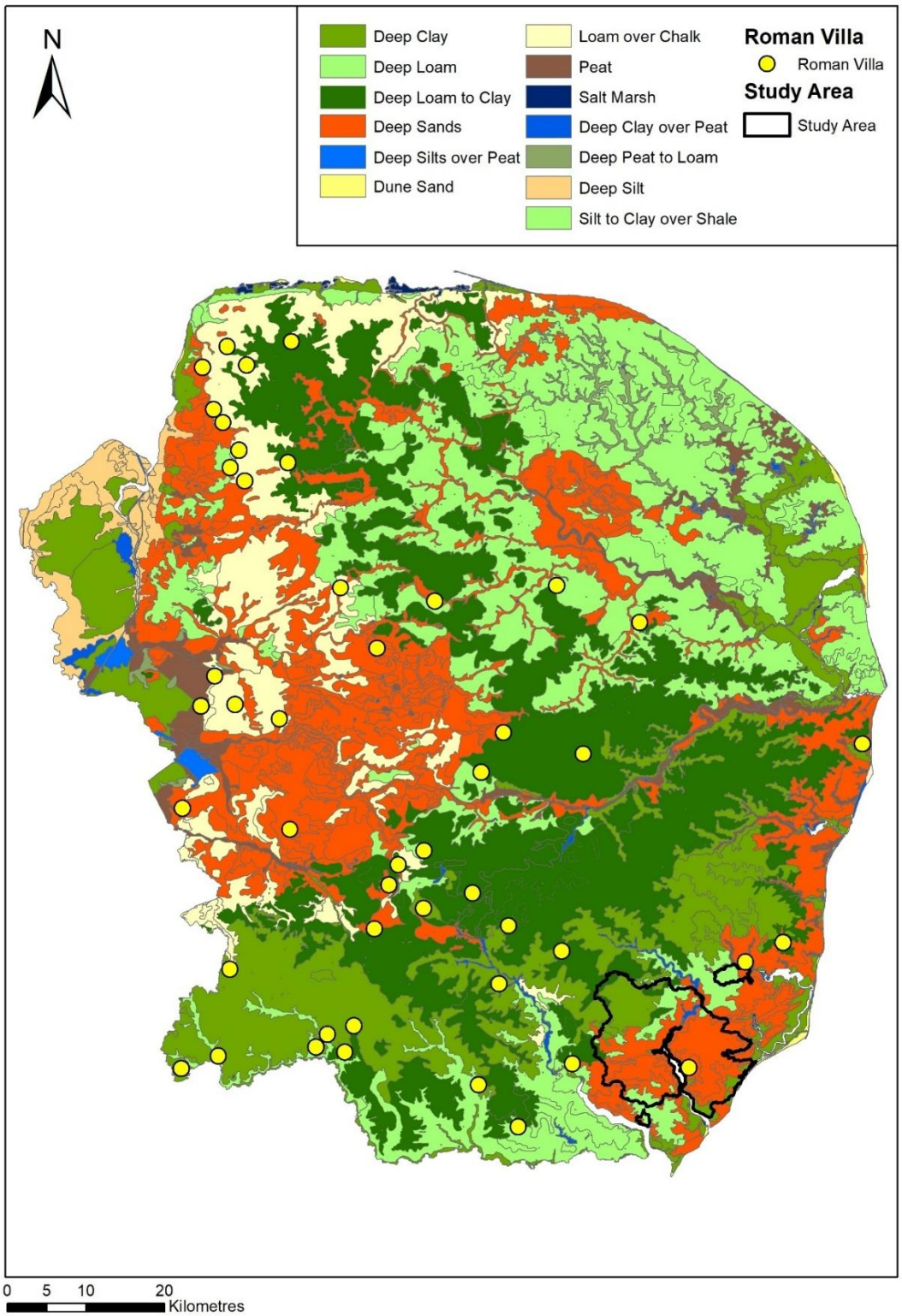

Figure 10.8: the distribution of Roman villas in East Anglia mapped from the Norfolk and Suffolk HERs and their relationship with the soils of the region. Again, Roman villas are overwhelmingly concentrated in or on the margins of areas of poor soil. Those that do not fit this pattern are largely associated with urban centres, such as the cluster in the centre of Norfolk associated with *Venta Icenorum.* Source: Suffolk HER and Norfolk HER.

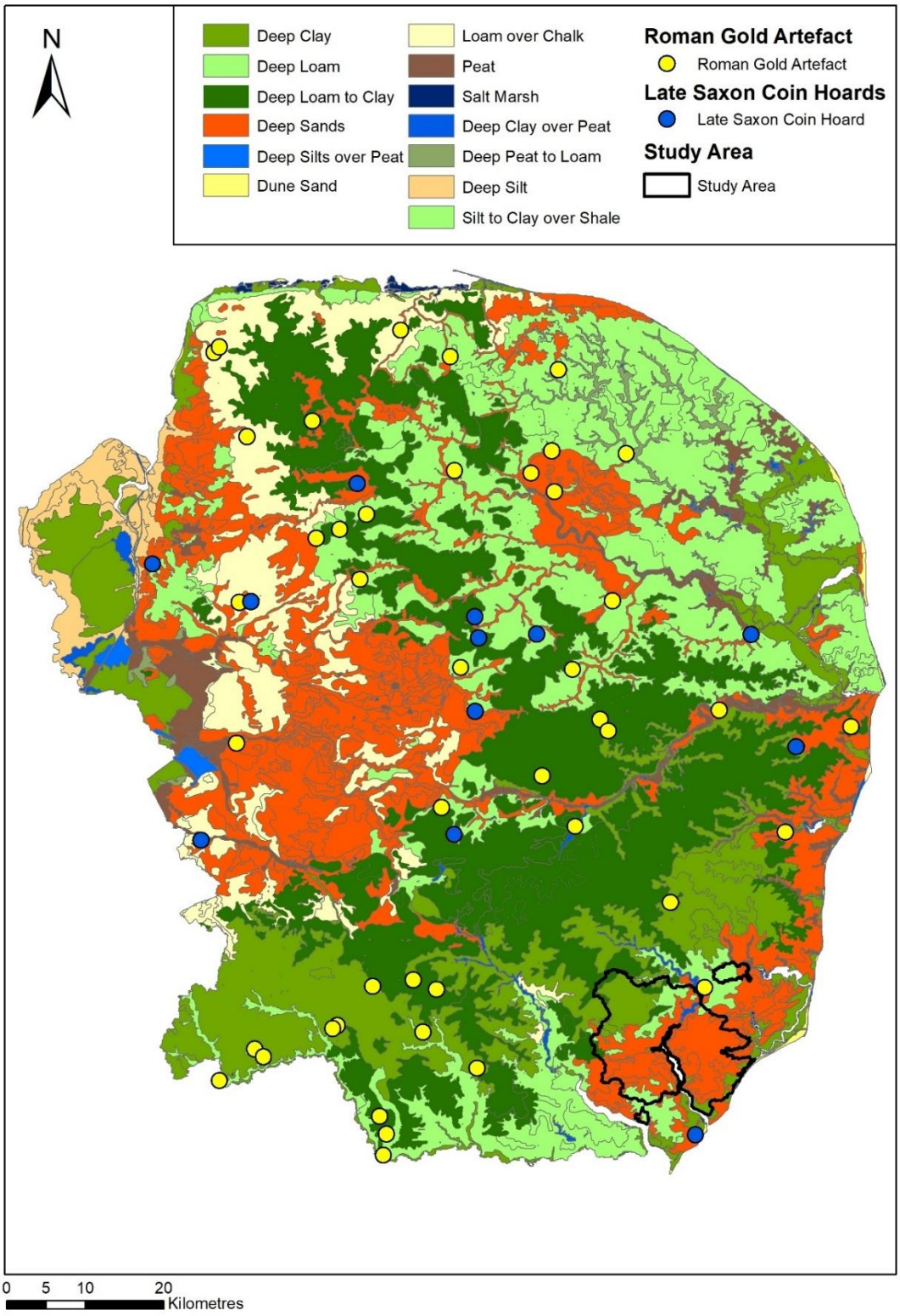

Figure 10.9: the distribution of Roman gold artefacts and Late Saxon coin hoards recorded with the PAS in East Anglia. Again, the majority of these artefacts, and the patterns of social differentiation they imply, have been recovered from areas of infertile soils. Source: PAS.

Such a pattern is superficially perplexing. Although many have suggested that lordship developed 'from above', this subregional variation implies a more organic trajectory for the development of social differentiation. If lordship was planted into contemporary society 'from above', it may be anticipated that the impact of such processes would have been experienced widely throughout the landscape; that this apparently did not occur to a significant degree in the claylands suggests that the development of social differentiation emerged 'from below'. Yet, the subtle, subregional nature of these variations in landholding structure imply that factors of more local concern than climate influenced the development of these patterns. The association between hierarchical, stratified societies and infertile soils suggests that it was the soils of the region that structured the varied tenurial trajectories taken in the Sandlings and the claylands.

The soils of High Suffolk, although occasionally intractable, are fertile and well suited to arable farming, as suggested by the retrenchment of arable agriculture to such landscapes in the nineteenth century 'where a good harvest of grain was assured'.[725] The acid sands of the Sandlings are, on the other hand, significantly less fertile, often becoming leached of nutrients and are, therefore, poorly suited to the production of grain crops, although the ease with which these soils could be worked ensured their importance for arable farming in periods characterised by limited ploughing technology. While in the claylands, the risk of harvest failure was relatively limited, arable farming, and life in general, was more precarious in the Sandlings, with the infertility of the soils increasing the likelihood of crop failure forcing the sale of land to more prosperous members of society who were better insulated against these periods of dearth. These poor, infertile soils, therefore, engendered the accumulation of wealth into increasingly fewer hands, resulting in the apparent variations in landholding and social structures in the study area. As Frank Stenton, discussing the decline of the status of the *ceorl* in the Late Saxon period, argued, 'a run of bad seasons or a plague of cattle' may have compelled *ceorls* to 'put themselves and their households at the disposal of local lords who could offer them food in evil days'.[726] Similar patterns are arguably apparent from the late Roman period, with the infertility of the soil and more frequent occurrence of harvest failure encouraging servitude and the construction of large holdings in a way not apparent in the more fertile regions lying to the west. It may, in this context, be significant that many Roman villas developed on antecedent occupation sites.[727]

Importantly, these patterns of progressive social stratification are manifested in documentary sources in the period here studied. In the High Middle Ages, wealthy landowners in Suffolk

[725] Stamp, *Land of Britain*, 389.
[726] Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, Oxford History of England (Clarendon Press, 1943), 471.
[727] Smith, 'The East', 229.

frequently purchased small plots of land from impoverished neighbours in times of dearth, constructing sizeable holdings.[728] In Hinderclay, for example, Adam of Hinderclay, a wealthy freeman, purchased eight parcels of land between 1294 and 1299, building a holding of approximately 50 acres, while poorer members of the community were forced to sell land in order to weather harvest failure and royal taxes.[729] Such examples represent early documented cases of progressive social polarisation which have, to judge from the ploughzone evidence, been taking place since at least the third century.

While the development of manorialism and lordship in the Late Saxon and High Medieval landscape has been the subject of much debate, a hitherto unrecognised association between patterns of social differentiation and the local landscape can be suggested. In times of dearth and hardship, poorer members of society sold land and entered bonds of servitude with neighbours who, perhaps owing to the fortunes of soil fertility or the lack of coheirs fracturing ancestral holdings, were wealthier than the rest of the community. Although periods of famine and harvest failure did indeed occur in the claylands, resulting in the limited social differentiation evident in all periods, the infertility of the Sandlings soils rendered these periods of dearth more likely and, therefore, engendered the accumulation of wealth into ever fewer hands. There are issues with such models, not least the strength of manorialism on the fertile clays of the Midlands in the Late Saxon and High Medieval periods.[730] Yet, despite this, it is clear that lordship and social differentiation did not develop in an undifferentiated environment.

Sandlings Sheep and Clayland Cattle

In preceding chapters, recurrent subregional variations in manuring strategies have been demonstrated, the result of long-term, environmentally structured patterns of landscape exploitation and livestock husbandry. The claylands were, throughout the entirety of the period here studied, cattle country, with large herds grazed upon the bosky wood pastures of the uplands. In periods of low population and relatively limited arable farming, such as the Early and Middle Saxon centuries, this grazing took place seasonally, while, at times of arable and demographic expansion, such as the Late Saxon period and High Middle Ages, these cattle were moved to grazing resources daily. During the winter, as well as overnight in later periods, these cattle were stalled in barns and yards surrounding settlement sites, their waste assiduously collected and piled in heaps where it became mixed with household refuse. This material, when

[728] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 60–61; Phillipp R. Schofield, 'Dearth, Debt and the Local Land Market in a Late Thirteenth-Century Village Community', *Agricultural History Review* 45 (1997): 1–17.
[729] Bailey, *Medieval Suffolk*, 60.
[730] This may be a result of climatic factors as posited by Williamson.

spread across the arable landscape as manure, resulted in the numerous intense ploughzone scatters evident in the countryside.

The poor grazing and limited water supplies of the Sandlings were, on the other hand, ill-suited to cattle and, instead, vast flocks of sheep were grazed on the upland heaths. These sheep were folded on arable fields overnight, applying their manure directly to the cropped land rather than being piled in heaps around farmsteads. This direct manuring presented few opportunities for household waste to become incorporated in manure, thus underpinning the relative scarcity of manuring scatters in the Sandlings.

Significantly, these patterns of landscape exploitation, mediated by the environment, also find manifestation in the post-medieval centuries. Arthur Young, writing in 1797, for example, highlighted that the claylands of the study area were renowned for cattle farming and dairying,[731] while nineteenth-century enclosure awards such as that for Bedfield in High Suffolk referenced the grazing of cattle and geese on common pastures but make no provision for sheep. [732] Such evidence further reinforces the long-term association between the clayland landscape and the rearing of large herds of cattle. While the claylands remained cattle country in the post-medieval period, the 'dry heaths' of the Sandlings were, according to Young, 'profitably managed only by' the grazing of sheep.[733] In such landscapes, folding was 'universally and anxiously practised, as the manure upon which the corn principally depends'.[734] Vast flocks were grazed in these landscapes, with a single tenant farmer in the northern Sandlings managing a flock of some 1600 sheep in the later eighteenth century.[735] Similar environmentally mediated patterns of exploitation are apparent in East Anglia more widely, with, for example, large flocks of sheep grazed on the heaths of Breckland,[736] while the claylands of South Norfolk were characterised by a mixed husbandry system centred around the management of cattle.[737]

It is argued here that subregional variations in manuring strategies in the study area reflect long-term continuities in livestock farming and landscape exploitation, structured by the environment; such patterns have, until now, gone unrecognised, owing to the arable-centric

[731] Young, *The Agriculture of Suffolk*, 197.
[732] Martin, 'Medieval Settlement', 239.
[733] Young, *The Agriculture of Suffolk*, 193.
[734] Young, *The Agriculture of Suffolk*, 193.
[735] P. H. Armstrong, 'Changes in the Land Use of the Suffolk Sandlings: A Study of the Disintegration of an Ecosystem', *Geography* 58 (1973): 1.
[736] Belcher, *Foldcourse*, 17–22.
[737] Mark Overton and Bruce M. S Campbell, 'Norfolk Livestock Farming 1250–1740: A Comparative Study of Manorial Accounts and Probate Inventories', *Journal of Historical Geography* 18 (1992): 382–86. See also Thirsk's farming regions in Joan Thirsk, 'The Farming Regions of England', in *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, ed. Joan Thirsk (Cambridge University Press, 1967), 4.

approach taken by many historians and archaeologists.[738] Yet, such patterns offer new insight into the development of the landscape of East Suffolk, and, perhaps, England more widely. The implications of these patterns of exploitation will be discussed below.

Livestock Farming, Co-Axial Landscapes and 'Resource Linkage' Tracks

As suggested in Chapter Four, networks of parallel tracks linking the valley floors to the upland 'wolds' can be found throughout East Anglia and beyond.[739] The chronology of these 'co-axial landscapes', as well as the factors underpinning their development, and indeed their function, remain unclear, however. Even in the muted, gently rolling terrain of East Suffolk, these tracks are evident, running perpendicular to river systems, climbing out of valleys towards grazing resources lying on the uplands. Numerous extant examples can be found in the study area, such as Drabb's Lane on the parish boundary between Burgh and Clopton, running from the parish church to the uplands. Examples also survive as cropmarks such as those in Sutton, Martlesham and Waldringfield (Figure 10.10). The development of these trackways can be understood in terms of the long-term patterns of landscape exploitation set out above.

The livestock husbandry systems discussed throughout imply a significant degree of movement from the settlements and arable land of the river valleys to upland grazing resources; this movement was, in the claylands before the tenth and eleventh centuries, seasonal, while in the Sandlings, sheep were driven from arable closes to the heaths of the uplands daily. The frequent movement of livestock from valley-side farmsteads to upland grazing resources underpins the development of these droveways, the result of a 'recurrent direction of movement' of cattle and sheep from the valley sides to the uplands, as well as the carrying of resources such as timber to occupation sites.[740] Road names such as Sheepdrift Road in Bromeswell, a linear track running across multiple parishes from the valley floor to the heath-covered uplands, provide further evidence for the function of these routeways (Figure 10.11). Although the scale of these tracks and lanes is, owing to the dissected topography of the region, relatively minor, this network of roads developed in response to the enduring need for farmers to drive their herds to and from pastures and heaths. While it has been suggested that these co-axial landscapes may be the result of largescale planning in the later Prehistoric and Roman periods,[741] these livestock

[738] Roberts and Wrathmell focus almost exclusively on patterns in the arable landscape, for example, in Roberts and Wrathmell, *Region and Place*.
[739] Warner, *Origins*, 44–53.
[740] Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 100.
[741] P. J. Drury and Warwick Rodwell, 'Settlement in the Later Iron Age and Roman Periods', in *Archaeology in Essex to AD 1500*, ed. D. G. Buckley (Council for British Archaeology, 1980), 60–64;

husbandry systems, and the patterns of movement throughout the countryside they engender, imply a more organic trajectory of development.

The patterns of settlement and landscape exploitation in the study area may also offer insight into the chronology of these resource linkage routes. It has been suggested in Chapter Eight that, in the claylands at least, the long-distance movement and seasonal grazing of livestock was curtailed by arable expansion and the shift of settlement to the margins of common grazing in the Late Saxon period; such evidence suggests, therefore, that many clayland 'resource linkage tracks' may be Roman or Early and Middle Saxon in date (Figures 10.12 and 10.13). This chronology is reinforced by the association between many of these droveways and occupation sites, as well as contemporary metalwork scatters recovered from these routes. Drabb's Lane, for example, links the later Roman settlement on the valley side with the uplands, running to an area of former common grazing on the interfluves; that the roadway is ghosted by the parish boundary attests the antiquity of this track (Figures 10.14 and 10.15). Similarly, Early Saxon settlement in Hasketon clustered around an extant trackway running to the interfluves; such examples suggest that these routeways pre-date the Late Saxon period. Although it is not here suggested that *all* of these tracks date from the period before the tenth or eleventh centuries, the recurrent movement between the farmland of river valleys and the upland wolds engendered circumstances in which such routes could develop, connecting farmsteads with their grazing hinterlands, before 'common edge drift' curtailed these patterns of movement.

The association between occupation sites and such trackways similarly suggests that a number of these resource linkage routes in the Sandlings may be contemporary with their clayland counterparts, and indeed, the excavated example underlying the Sutton Hoo cemetery predates the period here under interrogation.[742] These routeways may, however, have developed over a longer period than in the claylands. Late Saxon farmsteads in the Sandlings remained fixed in the valleys as well as at spring lines, owing to the lack of water sources on the interfluves. These farmsteads were often distant from upland pastures, engendering circumstances in which these resource linkage routes could continue to develop into the Late Saxon period and, on occasion, beyond. The development of new routeways in the tenth and eleventh centuries is attested by the association between settlement sites and resource linkage tracks in the Sandlings. Late Saxon settlements in Brightwell and Hemley, for example, lay adjacent to droveways linking the

Stephen Rippon, 'Early Planned Landscapes in South-East Essex', *Essex Archaeology and History* 22 (1991): 57–58.

[742] Madeline Hummler, 'Before Sutton Hoo: The Prehistoric Settlement (c. 3000 BC to c. AD 550)', in *Sutton Hoo: A Seventh-Century Princely Burial Ground and Its Context*, by Martin Carver (British Museum Press, 2005), 451–56.

upland heaths with the valley floor; the lack of antecedent occupation in the area suggests that these routes developed during the Late Saxon period or later. Indeed, scatters of metalwork spread along these routeways, likely lost during the daily movement of sheep, suggest that these tracks continued to be used and established during the pre-conquest period. It is, again, important to note, however, that many antecedent tracks likely remained in use in the Sandlings, employed alongside newly established routes serving new settlement centres.

The patterns of livestock husbandry attested in the ploughzone thus offer the opportunity to understand the factors underpinning, and indeed the chronological development of, resource linkage tracks. It has been suggested that these roughly parallel trackways were the result of early planning, perhaps in prehistory or the Early and Middle Saxon period. Yet, the livestock husbandry systems discussed above, and the patterns of movement they engender, suggest that, while the roots of the development of these trackways may be found in prehistory, the flowering of these routeways continued over a long period. Previously unrecognised subregional variations in the development of these tracks have, however, been suggested above. While the emergence of common edge settlement suggests that many of these tracks date from before the tenth century, the continued long-distance movement of sheep in the Sandlings from arable fields to upland heaths implies that the development of droveways continued into the High Middle Ages.

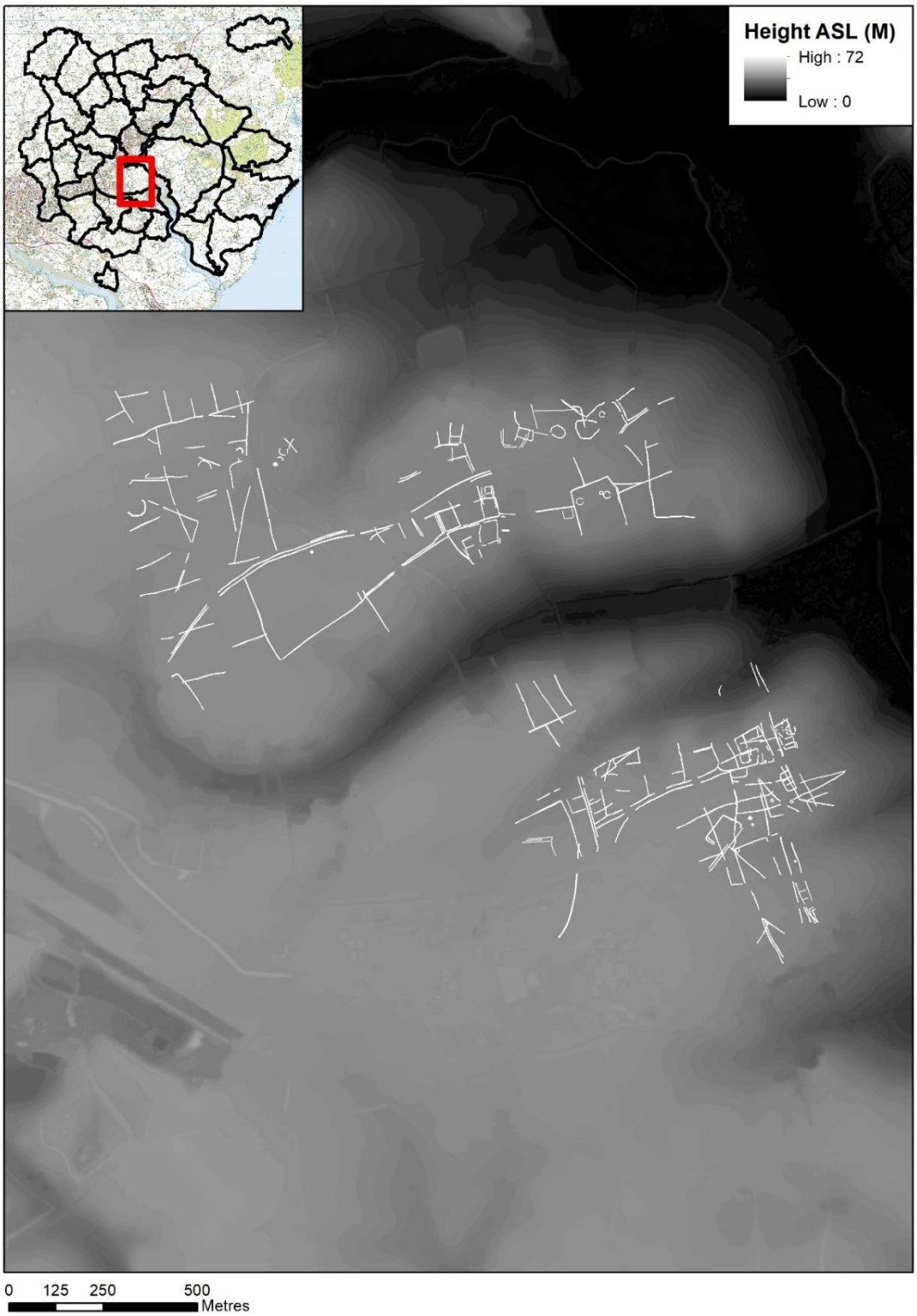

Figure 10.10: the cropmark complex straddling the parish boundary between Martlesham and Waldringfield, comprised of trackways running perpendicular to the River Deben, linking the settlements of the river valleys with the uplands. Source: Historic England Aerial Archaeology Mapping, https://historicengland.hub.arcgis.com/maps/e08a1ca270ac4caa8ba5efcb74f86a74/about, accessed 12/05/2025.

Figure 10.11: the continuation of Sheepdrift Road in Bromeswell, linking the meadows and farmsteads lying alongside the Deben to the heaths located on the uplands.

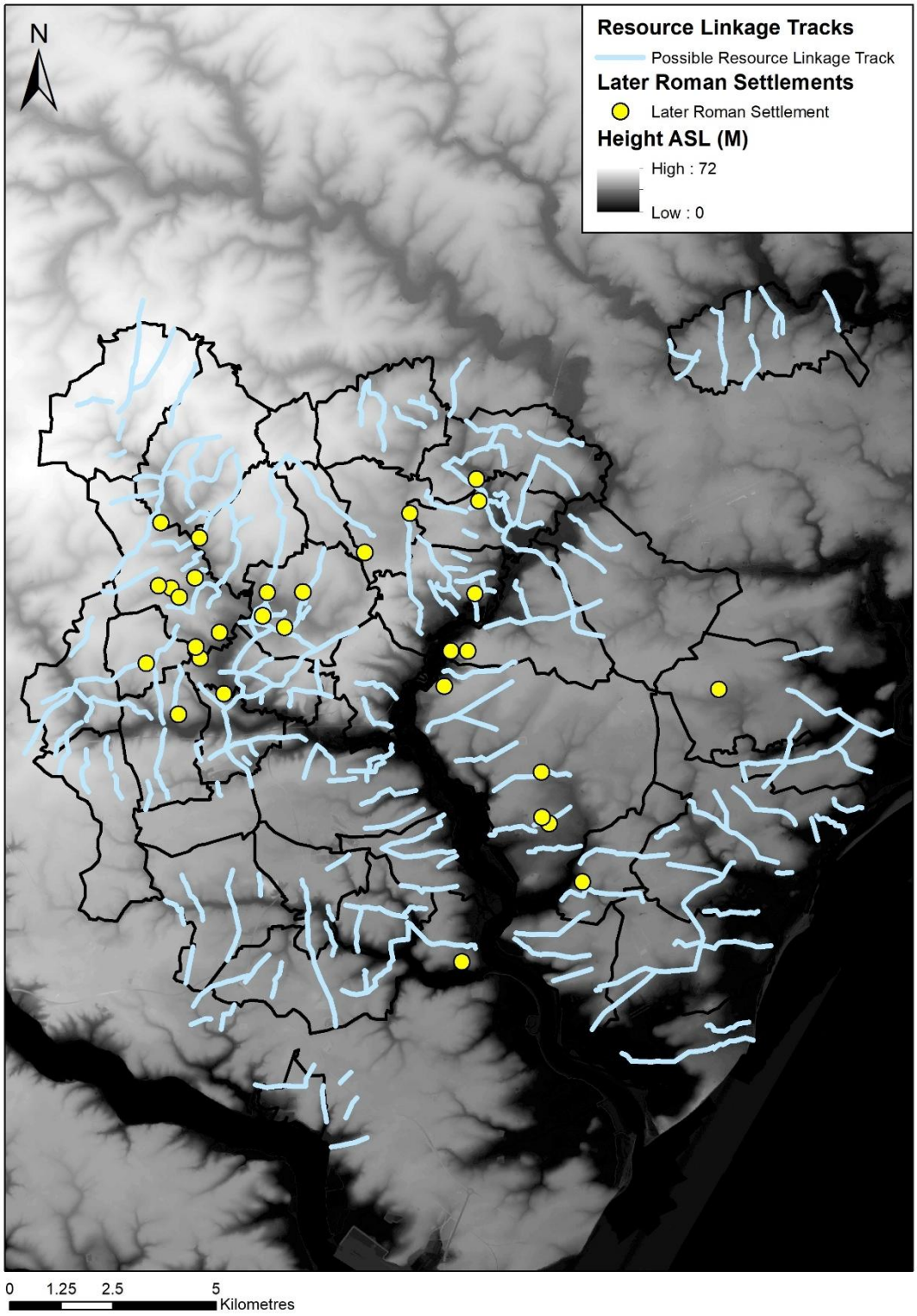

Figure 10.12: the distribution of possible resource linkage tracks in the study area. It is not here argued that these tracks formed part of co-axal field systems as in other areas of England. Rather, it is here argued that this system of roads and tracks running perpendicular to the main rivers of the region emerged as a result of the enduring patterns of stock movement from the arable landscape of the river valleys to the grazing resources of the uplands. The network of tracks has been altered by urban development and post-medieval changes such as parliamentary enclosure in, for example, the parish of Sutton, yet the routeways here highlighted indicate, however, the dominant grain of movement in the landscape. Source: DVSA 1-37.

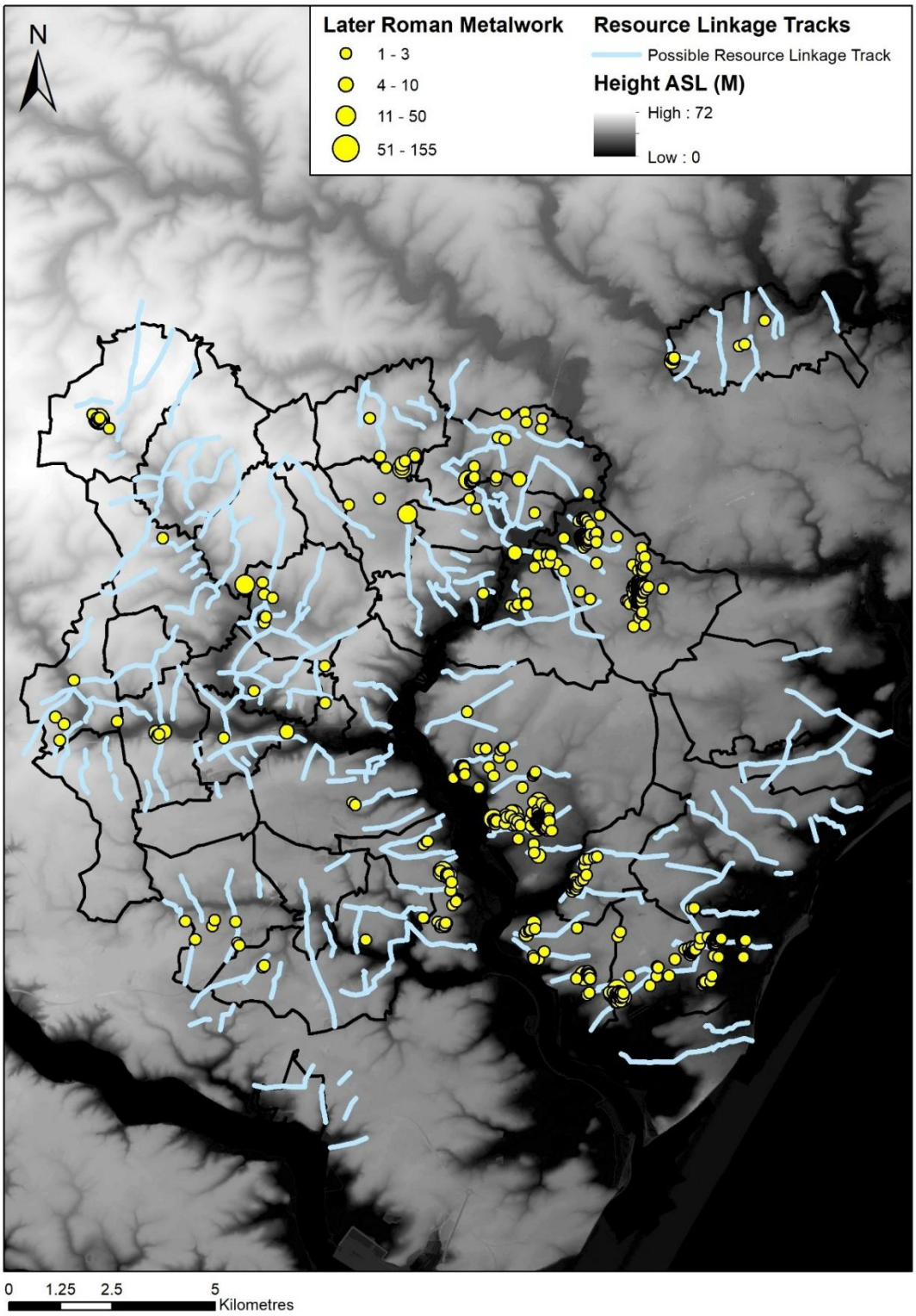

Figure 10.13: the possible association between Roman metalwork and resource linkage tracks. The scatters of metalwork along many of these routes through the landscape may imply that some of these tracks linking the settlements in the valleys and the uplands may date from the Roman period. Source: PAS.

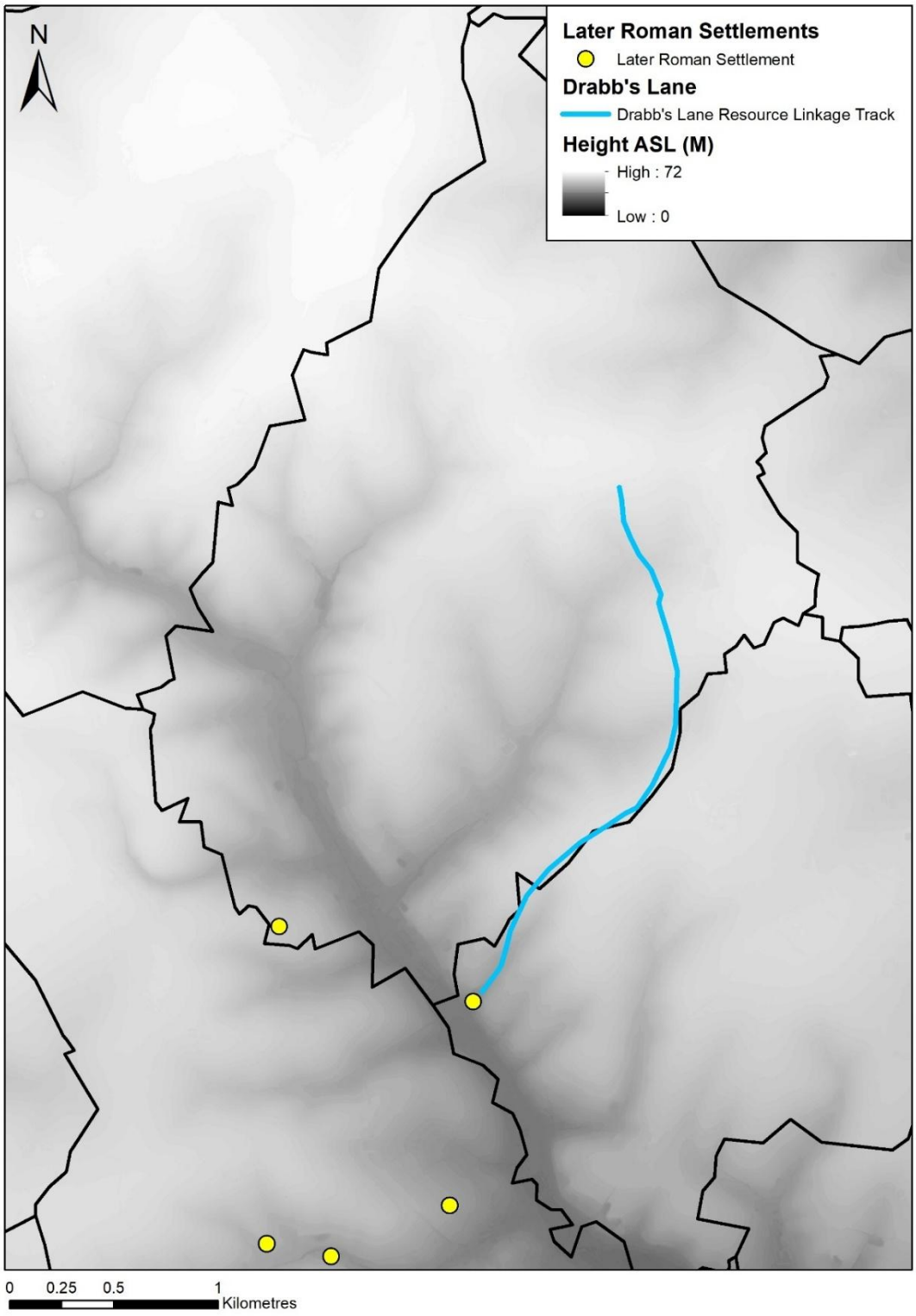

Figure 10.14: the possible 'resource linkage track' of Drabb's Lane and its relationship with Later Roman settlement in the study area. The association between this track, running from the river valleys to the interfluves, and Later Roman occupation may suggest that the routeway is contemporary with the settlement. Source: DVSA 4, 8, 10, 11, 17 and 26.

Figure 10.15: Drabb's Lane, running perpendicular to the river Lark, linking the riverine settlement sites to the level interfluves that, in the past, carried expanses of woodland and wood pasture. This routeway forms, in part, the boundary between the parishes of Burgh and Clopton.

Sheep, Cattle and Regionality

It has been laid out in Chapter Eight that the development of nucleated and common edge settlement forms can, in part, be interpreted as a response to patterns of livestock husbandry. This, in turn, may suggest that regionality in the landscape may similarly be associated with livestock farming.

That regional variation can be found in the English landscape has long been acknowledged, with sixteenth-century geographers such as William Harrison suggesting that the landscape was 'divided into champaign ground and woodlande, the houses of the first lie uniformly builded in every town together, with streets and lanes; whereas in the woodlande countries (except here and there in great market towns) they stand scattered abroad, each one dwelling in the midst of his own occupying'.[743] Such notions have more recently been manifested in the work of Rackham and Roberts and Wrathmell who each drew a broad division between the landscape of the Midlands, variously termed 'the Central Province' or 'Planned Countryside' and areas lying to the east and west, described by Rackham as 'Ancient Countryside'.[744] While many have acknowledged the existence of regional variation in the landscape of England, little consensus has been reached by scholars regarding the boundaries of these landscape zones. Indeed, the value of such binary schemes of regional categorisation has been called into question. Regions with intermediate characteristics exist between each of these zones; this, as well as the relatively imprecise boundaries of these regions, have been employed to question the validity of drawing such sharp dichotomies in the English landscape.[745]

As suggested in Chapter Four, the chronological development and factors underpinning these patterns of regional variation have also been much debated and a wide range of evidence has been employed to define the various regions of the English landscape, ranging from the distribution of Roman villas and medieval moated sites to patterns of post-medieval enclosure.[746] While some have suggested that regional variation emerged in the Late Saxon and post-conquest period, others, such as Rippon, have argued for a much longer-term trajectory of regional variation, stretching back into the later Iron Age.[747] It may, perhaps, appear unwise to employ evidence from a geographically limited area to understand the development of regionality at a national scale. Yet, the evidence from the study area offers insight into the

[743] William Harrison, *Description of England* (London, 1577), 20.
[744] Rackham, *History of the Countryside*, 4–5; Roberts and Wrathmell, *Region and Place*.
[745] Williamson, *Time and Topography*, 125–46.
[746] See, for example, Roberts and Wrathmell, *Region and Place*.
[747] Rippon, *Beyond the Medieval Village*, 250–68.

chronology of this development, as well as, perhaps, the factors underpinning the divergence of the many countrysides of England.

Perhaps the most widely employed indicator of regional variation is settlement patterns, with areas of nucleated settlement often juxtaposed with landscapes in which farmsteads were widely flung throughout the countryside; such a method was employed by Roberts and Wrathmell to define the 'Central Province'.[748] It has been laid out in Chapter Seven that the Middle Saxon settlement pattern of the study area was characterised by 'proto-villages' akin to those of the Midlands, with settlement only dispersing to the margins of areas of common grazing in the Late Saxon period and High Middle Ages. Such evidence suggests, therefore, that regionality, in terms of the settlement pattern at least, was a relatively late phenomenon.

While many have taken an arable-centric approach to understanding regionality, the evidence from the study area suggests that the emergence of common edge settlement can be viewed through the lens of livestock husbandry. As suggested in Chapter Eight, the dispersal of settlement to the margins of commons and greens may have been influenced by the fragmentation of the waste and the changing patterns of cattle management this engendered, as well as the widely available water supplies that enabled this expansion of settlement. It may, therefore, plausibly be argued that the development of regionality in the English countryside may have been structured by changing patterns of livestock husbandry, rather than the widely posited transformations in arable farming.

While the development of common edge settlement and coterminous lack of tightly nucleated villages in the study area seemingly lend support to the identification of regional variation in the English landscape, the evidence from the study area nuances such assertions. Although the entirety of East Suffolk was described by Rackham as 'Ancient Countryside', subtle subregional variations in the settlement pattern of the study area have been discussed above. While, for example, the claylands were, in the Late Saxon and High Medieval periods, characterised by widely dispersed farmsteads, the settlement pattern of the Sandlings was akin to that of the English Midlands, characterised by nucleated settlement forms, albeit somewhat more sprawling than those in the 'Central Province'. Indeed, parts of the Sandlings were enclosed through parliamentary act, also viewed by Rackham as a key indicator of 'Planned Countryside'.[749] While the broad dichotomies often drawn between the landscapes of 'Planned' and 'Ancient' countryside pervades much of current understanding of the landscape, the

[748] Roberts and Wrathmell, *Region and Place*, 4–21.
[749] Bucklesham and Foxhall were enclosed by parliamentary act in 1804, for example.

evidence from the study area suggests that such discussion serve only to homogenise the subtle nuances of the English countryside.

Livestock Husbandry and Open Field Origins

As has been highlighted throughout, the origins of open fields have been the subject of intense debate, particularly surrounding the chronology of this process and the factors that underpinned the development of intermixed holdings. Perhaps unsurprisingly, many have taken an arable-centric approach to understanding the development of open fields, focussing on technological innovation and the expansion of cultivation as key influences on the emergence of such arable systems.[750] Yet, although the management of large numbers of livestock was central to, and indeed directly limited, the expansion of arable farming, that changing patterns of livestock husbandry may have influenced the emergence of intermixed arable holdings has not been sufficiently interrogated.

It has been posited that variations in livestock management and manuring strategies may have been influenced by the extent and nature of open fields in any given region. Such notions are worthy of further consideration. In regions dominated by regular open fields, it has been suggested that sheep predominated; such a pattern was influenced by the ease with which these 'mobile muck spreaders' could be folded on fields, their dung becoming incorporated with the plough soil relatively evenly across the area on which they were penned.[751] In areas of intermixed holdings, such even distribution of manure was eminently preferable, ensuring fertility was equally restored to the lands of farmers who contributed to the communal flock. The tight regulations with which the communal flock was managed may also have encouraged a preference for sheep in these areas; sheep, as opposed to cattle, are easier to contain in particular areas of fields, making the regulation of a fold course more efficient. In areas of irregular open fields, it has been suggested that cattle predominated; these beasts are not suited to folding, owing to their size and tendency to compact the soil with their hooves. Their dung, 'most effective when rotted down in yards', was instead collected and carted to the fields by hand,[752] an agricultural strategy made all the more efficient by the clustering of holdings in the area surrounding the farmstead. Such notions are largely persuasive, appearing to add further weight to the patterns laid out above; the claylands, a landscape of irregular open fields, were

[750] For the historiography of open field agriculture, see Williamson et al., *Champion*, 7–18.
[751] Williamson, 'Agriculture, Lords and Landscape', 231.
[752] Williamson, 'Agriculture, Lords and Landscape', 231.

cattle country, while the Sandlings, where open fields took a somewhat more regular, and indeed regulated, form, were dominated by sheep.

There are, however, issues with such notions, not least the long-term association between cattle and the claylands. It can, instead, be argued that the development of open fields may, in fact, have been associated with varied and changing patterns of livestock husbandry. The Midlands was, in the Early and Middle Saxon centuries, a landscape in which cattle were frequently farmed.[753] As cultivation expanded at the expense of waste and woodland, the areas in which these animals could be successfully managed declined, yet the need for their manure increased; in essence, as arable farming expanded, the need for oxen for traction and manure grew, while the quantities of leafy hay and upland grazing declined. Those surviving grazing resources suitable for cattle were needed for the maintenance of oxen for traction. In such circumstances, a shift to an alternative livestock husbandry system was necessary, namely the transition to sheep farming, grazed on those remaining areas of waste and post-harvest fallows.[754] Such sheep, with lower nutritional requirements than cattle, could successfully draw sustenance from the meagre pickings of the post-harvest fallow in a way that cattle could not.[755] That a decline of cattle farming occurred in the Midlands is reinforced by the decreasing numbers of cattle, and the corresponding increase in sheep, recovered from rural sites such as Yarnton, located in 'Planned Countryside', in the Middle and Late Saxon period, precisely the time that cultivation was expanding and, perhaps, open fields began to appear in the landscape.[756]

It was not, however, possible to graze sheep on these post-harvest fallows if neighbouring unhedged land units remained under crop, requiring greater communal regulation and integration of farming to prevent damage to neighbouring properties. With this shift to sheep husbandry, communal farming was further encouraged by the need to ensure equal distribution of manure from folded sheep; such requirements may have necessitated the reorganisation of arable holdings in a regular pattern, resulting in the emergence of regular open fields. As Hamerow notes, the ninth century marked the beginning of 'a new strategy for sheep husbandry',[757] perhaps coterminous with the agrarian changes laid out above. Rather than a

[753] McKerracher, for example, has highlighted that cattle bones are dominant on Middle Saxon sites in the Midlands, with the relative proportion of sheep to cattle increasing in the Late Saxon and High Medieval centuries. See McKerracher, *Farming Transformed*, 52.
[754] Elizabeth Stroud, 'Understanding Early Medieval Crop and Animal Husbandry through Isotopic Analysis', in *New Perspectives on the Medieval 'Agricultural Revolution'*, ed. Mark McKerracher and Helena Hamerow (Liverpool University Press, 2022).
[755] Margetts, *Wandering Herd*, 226.
[756] Hamerow, *Rural Settlements*, 156–57.
[757] Hamerow, *Rural Settlements*, 157.

universal period of agricultural change, this shift in arable farming, like the common edge drift of East Anglia may have occurred locally. Although farming communities responded in similar fashions to the decline of the resources needed for cattle farming, these factors occurred at different periods in individual parishes; the emergence of open fields, dominated by the farming of sheep, may have been a slow one. The limited quantity of woodland and hedgerows in the Midlands may have further exacerbated these trends. The importance of leafy hay for the maintenance of cattle, in particular, has been laid out elsewhere; the decline of this resource, as hedges and woods were grubbed out for cultivation, may have accelerated the decline of cattle farming.

It is not here suggested that this decline in the resources for, and therefore, prevalence of, cattle farming was met with a single period in which all cattle were slaughtered and replaced by sheep, however. Instead, it is proposed that the decline of wood pasture brought about by the increasing cultivation of the wastes precipitated a shift to the farming of sheep, livestock which are easily grazed on fallow land. The grazing of these sheep was not, however, possible when other farmers land, farmed in unhedged strips, was still under crop. Hence, greater community cohesion was necessary, dragging farmers into communal cultivation. In order to ensure equal access to the manure of communal flocks, complex, intermixed holdings were reorganised in a regular pattern. The spreading of household waste on arable land was undertaken in such environments but, as in the Sandlings, this was secondary to the folding of livestock on the open fields. Jones has suggested that the laying out of open fields 'went hand in hand with' and, perhaps, precipitated 'a new manuring strategy'.[758] It is here, instead, suggested that changes to livestock management influenced the emergence of new manuring strategies which may have contributed to the development of open fields.

While the decline of grazing resources has previously been posited as underpinning the development of open fields in the Midlands,[759] it has forcefully, and indeed, convincingly, been argued that substantial areas of rough grazing were available in Champion landscapes, often taking the form of ribbons of pasture woven through the open fields.[760] The prevalence of these grazing resources may suggest, therefore, that the impact of the decline of pasture, and the coterminous shift to sheep farming it engendered, was less significant than posited above. Such notions are worthy of further interrogation.

[758] Jones, 'Signatures', 167.
[759] Fox, 'The Midlands System'; Thirsk, 'Origins of Common Fields'.
[760] Williamson et al., *Champion*.

Although it is true that substantial grazing resources remained available in Champion areas such as Northamptonshire, it is apparent that these areas of 'open-field pasture' were insufficient to support a sizeable cattle economy and, indeed, were barely adequate to sustain the plough oxen needed for cultivation. Each plough ox required some 4 acres of grazing for sustenance during the summer,[761] grazing that must, as Thirsk has suggested, consist of 'lush grass', rather than the meagre pickings of fallows and the post-harvest stubble.[762] While Midland counties such as Northamptonshire were endowed with greater grazing resources than has widely been recognised, these were insufficient to support the plough oxen required for cultivation and could not, therefore, be used to graze large numbers of cattle. In the parish of Desborough, for example, 4.5 plough teams are recorded at the time of Domesday, equating to some 36 oxen which required over 140 acres of grassland during summer. Yet, archaeological evidence suggests the presence of only 49 acres of 'open-field pasture'. While the need for fodder was supplemented by both the opening of meadowland for grazing after the hay harvest, as well as through fodder crops grown in the open fields, it is clear that insufficient grazing resources were available to sustain sizeable herds of cattle. In such circumstances, livestock husbandry systems shifted to an ovine rather than a bovine focus, centring around the management of large flocks of sheep which could be grazed on fallows and patches of rough grazing. Indeed, while it has been noted that 'open-field pasture was generally extensive in the centre and north-west' of Northamptonshire, it is arguable that, even in these areas, the extent of grassland was not large enough to support the necessary plough oxen. In Ashby St Ledger and Adstone, for example, Domesday records 8 and 24 plough teams respectively, requiring some 256 acres of grassland in Ashby St Ledger, while 768 acres were needed in Adstone. Yet, only 163 acres of open-field pasture are archaeologically attested in Ashby St Ledger, while 229 acres were present in Adstone.[763] Although, again, other sources of grazing and fodder were employed to feed plough oxen, insufficient grazing resources were available to sustain a significant cattle economy, necessitating a shift to the management of flocks of sheep to provide manure for arable cultivation. Similar patterns have been noted in Hampshire and Wiltshire, both 'Champion' regions, with the limited hay and pasture in these areas given over to sustaining oxen rather than herds of cattle.[764]

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[761] E J T Collins, 'The Latter-Day History of the Draught Ox in England, 1770–1964', *Agricultural History Review* 58 (2010): 203.
[762] Joan Thirsk, 'Farming Techniques', in *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, ed. Joan Thirsk, IV (Cambridge University Press, 1967), 165.
[763] The above figures were calculated using data from Tom Williamson et al., 'A GIS Aided Study of Agriculture and Landscape in Midland England', 2011, https://doi.org/10.5284/1000151.
[764] Margetts, *Wandering Herd*, 225.

In areas of 'Ancient Countryside', however, although cultivation expanded in the Late Saxon and High Medieval periods, the resources required for cattle farming, the most important of which may have been leafy hay, remained accessible, particularly from hedges and wood pasture. These extensive grazing and fodder resources enabled the continued exploitation of cattle for meat, manure and traction, turned out onto pastures during the day before being stalled in yards and barns where their waste was collected. As this waste could be spread even with neighbouring fields under crop with no risk of the crops being eaten by wandering livestock, there was little impetus to be drawn into closely regulated communal farming systems. The clustering of holdings around the farmstead, limiting the distance that farmyard manure was carted, was also preferrable in these cattle-based economies. In such circumstances, the irregular open fields were not reorganised in a manner akin to that of the Midlands. This is not to deny that farming operated communally in some respects, but rather to suggest that there was little attraction to be drawn into the regular open field systems of the Midlands.

Of course, as has been argued above, these variations in livestock farming, related to the environment, are not restricted to the High Middle Ages. It may reasonably be questioned, therefore, why such patterns of livestock management should have changed in this period, resulting in the emergence of open fields, when variations in livestock husbandry and manuring strategies had been evident for a thousand years. It is arguable that intermixed arable fields emerged as a result of the growing population and the increasing extent of cultivation and fragmentation of arable holdings this engendered. As noted in Chapter Nine, the expansion of cultivation and population in East Suffolk, and perhaps, therefore, England as a whole, reached new ground in the High Middle Ages, expanding beyond the peaks of the later Roman centuries. This expansion of population may have, for the first time, put pressure on the resources needed for cattle farming. This is not to suggest that there was a general pasture crisis as Thirsk eloquently highlighted,[765] such notions have rightly been challenged.[766] Rather, it is here suggested that there may have been a 'crisis of cattle farming', a point reached in which the resources, largely grazing land and leafy hay, were no longer available in sufficient quantities in the Midlands to support the numbers of cattle needed, with those surviving grazing resources dedicated to the maintenance of plough teams.

While, up to this point, a dichotomy has been posited between the cattle country of clayland East Anglia and the sheep dominated Midlands, patterns of livestock husbandry, and the

[765] Thirsk, 'The Common Fields'.
[766] Williamson, Liddiard, and Partida, *Champion*, 106–13.

landscapes they engender, are much more nuanced. Despite lying in the Midlands, areas such as the Whittlewood Forest, straddling the county boundary between Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire, were, in the Middle Ages, marked by extensive grazing resources eminently suited to the farming of cattle. Indeed, the woodland of the Forest was extensively exploited as grazing for large numbers of cattle alongside herds of deer, while sheep were excluded.[767] Significantly, this centrality of cattle farming to the agrarian economy engendered a landscape more akin in many ways to that of the East Anglian claylands than of the Midlands, marked by a somewhat dispersed settlement pattern and relatively irregular open fields that were limited in extent.[768] Again, livestock husbandry practices, mediated by the local environment, both underpinned and restricted the development of regular open fields. Similar patterns are apparent in the Oxfordshire Chilterns. The Chiltern hills were marked by extensive woodland and wood pastures suited to the management of herds of cattle in the High Middle Ages; in such landscapes, again, a pattern of dispersed farmsteads scattered throughout the countryside interspersed with patches of irregular open fields emerged.[769]

Such notions can, of course, be challenged, but the environmentally enforced variations in farming and manuring laid out above suggest that there may be some merit in such a model of agricultural development. The loss of the resources required for cattle may have necessitated a shift to ovine rather than bovine farming, requiring greater community cohesion and coordination. In the East Anglian claylands, however, the grazing and leafy hay required for cattle farming remained prevalent in this landscape known to sixteenth-century topographers as the 'woodlande', owing to its bosky appearance.[770] This may, therefore, have removed the impetus to reorganise the arable landscape into regular open fields, with the need to cart manure by hand to the fields encouraging the clustering of holdings in the area surrounding farmsteads. That areas of 'Ancient Countryside' were known for cattle farming in the sixteenth century, while the Midlands was renowned for the production of sheep, adds further weight to these assertions.[771] While many have taken an arable-centric approach to understanding the development of open field agriculture in the English countryside, the evidence laid out above suggests that this can also profitably be viewed through the lens of the environmentally structured patterns of livestock husbandry posited throughout this thesis.

[767] Williamson et al., *Champion*, 107–8.
[768] Jones and Page, *Medieval Villages*, 133–80; Williamson et al., *Champion*, 178–83.
[769] Mileson and Brookes, *Peasant Perceptions*, 158–59.
[770] Harrison, *Description of England*, 20.
[771] Eric Kerridge, *The Farmers of Old England* (Routledge, 1973), 19–20.

Conclusion: Sheep, Cows and Continuity in the Countryside

While dramatic transformations in the countryside, particularly in the settlement pattern, have been laid out in the period-specific chapters above, it should, by now, be clear that long-term continuities can also be found woven through the landscape of East Suffolk, structured by interactions with, and the exploitation of, the natural environment. Although such 'environmental determinism' has long been derided, the evidence from the study area suggests that the patterns of settlement and agrarian exploitation of East Suffolk must be viewed through the lens of the environments in which early farmers operated.

It is clear that the settlement pattern of East Suffolk was mediated by the availability of water, with the need to access reliable supplies acting as a brake on settlement dispersal in landscapes in which this was restricted, such as the Sandlings. Similar patterns are apparent in areas such as Breckland, where the limited water supplies again resulted in the development of sprawling nucleations of farmsteads ranged alongside water sources in the High Middle Ages.

A recurrent association between infertile soils and stratified societies has been posited above, both within the study area as well as within East Anglia more widely. Such patterns may, again, plausibly result from long-term interactions between early farmers and the environment. In agriculturally marginal areas, the relative frequency of harvest failure, owing to the infertility of the soil, resulted in poorer members of society selling their holdings and placing themselves in bonds of service with wealthier members of the community in order to negotiate periods of dearth. Such patterns, over long periods, resulted in the progressive accumulation of wealth in ever fewer hands. While this harvest failure similarly occurred in the claylands, resulting in the limited social differentiation apparent, the fertility of the soil rendered these periods of dearth less frequent, and therefore, small farms remained viable, engendering a landscape of peasant proprietors.

It has been established that recurrent, environmentally structured variations in manuring strategies are apparent in the study area, arguably the result of differing livestock husbandry and landscape exploitation systems. These varied patterns of livestock management plausibly underpinned the development of resource linkage tracks, the result of the movement of livestock from valley-side settlements to their wider grazing hinterland. Despite the long-held arable-centrism of much of recent historiography, these patterns of livestock husbandry, and their subsequent breakdown in the Midlands, may also have underpinned the emergence of common fields. The expansion of arable cultivation, and in particular the assarting of areas of bosky wood pasture used both for grazing and the production of leafy hay, may have brought

about a collapse of cattle farming, with the remaining grazing resources employed to feed the ever-growing numbers of plough oxen. Such circumstances necessitated a shift from bovine to ovine farming, with sheep grazed on post-harvest fallows, the exploitation of which pulled farmers into increasingly communal forms of agriculture.

The long-term patterns of environmentally structured landscape exploitation laid out above may, in many ways, appear controversial, particularly in light of the widespread refusal to fully acknowledge the importance of the environment in underpinning the development of the countryside. Yet, the farmers of early England did not operate in an undifferentiated environment, something to which they displayed apparent sensitivity.[772] The patterns of settlement and agriculture in East Suffolk, and in particular the systems of livestock husbandry manifested in the ploughzone, are the result of enduring patterns of interaction with, and exploitation of, the local environment. The existence and implications of such patterns must be considered in future studies.

[772] Williamson et al., *Champion*, 223.

Conclusion: Ploughzone Archaeology and Landscape History

A 'Blended' Approach to Ploughzone Archaeology

As laid out in Chapter Two, much of current understanding of historic settlement patterns and arable farming at a landscape scale is based upon the evidence of pottery scatters recovered from the plough soil. Few fieldwalking surveys have, however, been carried out in recent years, owing to the proliferation of more fashionable survey techniques. Although the biases and limitations of fieldwalking, and the datasets it produces, have been discussed in Chapter One, it is clear that fieldwalking datasets provide a sturdy foundation upon which studies of the countryside can be built. The integration of metalwork scatters, particularly those from the PAS, into studies of the past has, however, been slower, in part owing to limited understanding of what activities and processes generated these spreads of artefacts in the plough soil. Before this present study, the association between scatters of pottery and metalwork from the ploughzone had been little explored, with the results of fieldwalking and metal detecting not previously systematically incorporated into a single study of the landscape. Indeed, although it had tentatively been suggested that these artefacts may follow varied taphonomic processes and, therefore, reflect differing activities, the extent to which this was true was unclear.

It was demonstrated in Chapter Two that pottery and metalwork scatters do indeed reflect differing activities and, accordingly, offer varied, yet complementary, insight into past landscapes. Throughout Chapter Two, it was evidenced that pottery scatters offer relatively complete insight into a limited range of activities, such as settlement and manuring, highlighting, in particular, the farmsteads and fields of the lower orders. Metalwork scatters, on the other hand, present opportunities to refine the interpretation of the landscape implied by spreads of pottery in the plough soil, enabling the patterns of activity revealed by fieldwalking to be qualified and refined. Spreads of metalwork from the ploughzone also offer greater insight into the chronology of activity on any given site than pottery scatters alone. A hitherto unrecognised association between metalwork scatters from the plough soil and patterns of social differentiation was demonstrated; while pottery scatters demarcate sites of all statuses, spreads of metalwork enable those elite sites and, significantly, the fields farmed from such settlements, to be differentiated from the farmsteads and arable land of the peasantry.

Out of Chapter Two, a 'blended' approach to ploughzone archaeology was developed, enabling pottery and metalwork scatters to be systematically combined into a single study at a landscape

scale for the first time, the value of which was demonstrated in subsequent chapters. This methodology must be employed throughout England, and indeed, Europe more widely, to both provide new insights into the development of the landscape, as well as refine this 'blended approach' in other social and cultural settings.

The Historic Landscape of East Suffolk

This methodology was applied to previously unpublished datasets in an environmentally varied tract of the East Suffolk landscape to corroborate, challenge and nuance current understanding of settlement and agriculture from the later Roman period to the eve of the Black Death; such a methodology generated novel and wide-ranging insights into the development of the countryside.

The value of focussing on such a geographically limited study area may, perhaps, be called into question, particularly when considering the county-wide, and indeed national, scale of other recent studies. Throughout previous chapters, patterns of subregional variation have, however, been highlighted, patterns that have, in other more geographically diverse studies, been overlooked, resulting in the evident homogenisation of the landscape. Such evidence suggests that further regional studies of the historic landscape are required.

There has, in many cases, been a tendency among historians and archaeologists to highlight patterns of change in the countryside, particularly in the settlement pattern; supposedly stable later Roman occupation sites, for example, are often contrasted with the transient farmsteads of the Early Saxon period. While the Early Saxon period appears somewhat of an aberration (Figures 10.3 and 10.4), the methodology developed in Chapter Two, and the opportunities for closely interrogating patterns of occupation and abandonment in the countryside it presents, suggests, however, that such notions overlook a more complex pattern of settlement stability and change at a landscape scale, often structured by the environment. Indeed, such is the scale of this continuity that, in many respects, the landscape of High Medieval East Suffolk resembles that of the later Roman period.

Hitherto unrecognised long-term patterns of social differentiation have been identified in preceding chapters, the result of interactions with the environment over many millennia. While many have emphasised the role of human agency in the 'top-down' development of social hierarchies, the evidence from East Suffolk suggests a more organic model for the development of social differentiation in the countryside, structured by interaction with the local environment. In regions of poor soil, periods of harvest failure and dearth engendered the accumulation of

wealth and land into ever-fewer hands, while in more fertile areas, the viability of small farms ensured the survival of a class of moderately wealthy peasant proprietors. While there are issues with the application of such models beyond East Anglia, this 'blended' methodology must be applied to a wider study area to interrogate these patterns of social differentiation over the *longue durée.*

Perhaps the most controversial outcome of this present study is the identification of long-term, environmentally structured patterns of landscape exploitation and livestock husbandry, the implications of which have been considered in Chapter Ten. While the identification of patterns of livestock husbandry from spreads of pottery and metalwork recovered from arable fields may be challenged, the evidence from the ploughzone is suggestive of continued patterns of exploitation which persisted, in many cases, into the nineteenth century. It has been suggested above that these livestock management systems, and their breakdown in the Late Saxon and High Medieval Midlands, may have underpinned the development of regional variation and open field agriculture. The implications of such notions, particularly for the emergence of the varied settlement patterns of the many countrysides of England, must be considered in future studies.

The Past from the Ploughzone

The evidence from the ploughzone thus presents, in East Suffolk at least, a complex and varied trajectory for the development of settlement, social differentiation and the agrarian landscape. The interpretation of the landscape derived from pottery scatters from the plough soil is often repeated, yet rarely directly challenged, with the datasets themselves coming under little direct interrogation. The methodology developed in Chapter Two offers the opportunity for the radical revision of such interpretations, as well as for the identification of new patterns in the past.

While the vision of the countryside provided by fieldwalking is somewhat static and unchanging, the landscape of East Suffolk was, in all periods, dynamic, influenced by the environment and sculpted by many hands. As G.C. Homans noted, the landscape is the 'engravings of societies older than written history';[773] scatters of pottery and metalwork recovered from the plough soil, interpreted through the methodology developed above, enable the complexities of these societies, and the landscapes they sculpted, to be unpicked.

[773] George Homans, *English Villagers of the Thirteenth Century* (Harvard University Press, 1941), 13.

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Appendix One – Rendlesham Dataset Normalisation

As noted in Chapter Two, some fields in the Rendlesham study area were subject to more intensive metal detecting than others; areas that proved productive on previous visits were intensively searched while fields which had produced few artefacts were subject to only limited searching. These issues also exist at a more granular level; areas within individual fields which yielded more finds were also more intensively searched, while areas of the same field that proved less productive were not. Such issues can clearly impact the quantity of material recovered and may, therefore, imply that the aggregate distribution of material is, to some degree, reflective of patterns of searching by the detectorists as opposed to genuine historic activity.

As the overall time spent surveying each field was, however, recorded, it is possible to normalise the data to assess the impact of the varied patterns of searching upon recovery rates and overall distribution of metalwork in the study area. There is great variation in the time spent searching individual fields; while fields such as Spring Hill were subject to 2.1 days of searching, Park Field was surveyed for a total of 296.38 days. To normalise the data and understand the impact of repeated searching on the Rendlesham dataset, the number of finds recovered per day per hectare searched for each field has been calculated.[774] To further understand the impact of varying patterns of searching, the data has also been normalised by period.

It is clear that the aggregate data for each period is broadly congruent with the normalised data, suggesting that, while it is inevitable that the repeated searching of productive areas has resulted in greater quantities of material being recovered, this appears to have exacerbated existing patterns of presence and absence as opposed to seriously distorting the dataset; such notions suggest that the aggregate distribution of finds is indeed representative of historic patterns.

[774] This method of dataset normalisation follows that used in Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 65–72. This normalisation does not account for the varied intensity of searching within individual fields, however.

***c*. AD 250-1350**

Field Name	Area (ha)[775]	Total Days	Total Finds[776]	Finds per Day	Finds per Day per Hectare
Steeple Tye	11.34	104.88	138	1.32	0.12
Park Field	6.67	296.38	781	2.64	0.40
Kitchen Piece	2.84	51.66	77	1.49	0.52
Dog Kennel Field	3.86	124.19	300	2.42	0.63
Collets	13.27	140.25	244	1.74	0.13
Dock Hill	6.47	126.07	225	1.78	0.28
Spring Hill	2.87	2.10	2	0.95	0.33
Three Corner Tye	4.95	73.55	158	2.15	0.43
Black Croft	5.10	67.00	79	1.18	0.23
Sand Walk	8.30	315.64	604	1.91	0.23
Hut Field	11.85	43.50	98	2.25	0.19
Foxburgh South	12.66	29.00	66	2.28	0.18

Table A1.1: normalisation of the Rendlesham metalwork dataset for all periods.

[775] Number of days spent searching individual fields, as well as area data is derived from Scull et al., *Lordship and Landscape*, 66.

[776] In order to allow accurate comparison between pottery recovered while fieldwalking and metalwork, sherds of pottery recovered by the detectorists during the detecting survey have been discounted from the following analysis.

***c.* AD 250-410**

Field Name	Total Finds	Finds per Day	Finds per Day per Hectare
Steeple Tye	14	0.13	0.011
Park Field	296	1.00	0.150
Kitchen Piece	3	0.06	0.021
Dog Kennel Field	72	0.58	0.150
Collets	40	0.29	0.022
Dock Hill	38	0.30	0.046
Spring Hill	0	0	0
Three Corner Tye	10	0.14	0.028
Black Croft	7	0.10	0.020
Sand Walk	108	0.34	0.041
Hut Field	54	1.24	0.104
Foxburgh South	43	1.48	0.117

Table A1.2: normalisation of the Rendlesham later Roman metalwork dataset.

***c.* AD 410-700**

Field Name	Total Finds	Finds per Day	Finds per Day per Hectare
Steeple Tye	27	0.26	0.230
Park Field	195	0.66	0.099
Kitchen Piece	20	0.39	0.139
Dog Kennel Field	138	1.11	0.288
Collets	21	0.15	0.011
Dock Hill	42	0.33	0.051
Spring Hill	0	0	0
Three Corner Tye	27	0.37	0.074
Black Croft	13	0.19	0.037
Sand Walk	321	1.02	0.123
Hut Field	5	0.11	0.009
Foxburgh South	5	0.17	0.013

Table A1.3: normalisation of the Rendlesham Early Saxon metalwork dataset.

***c*. AD 700-850**

Field Name	Total Finds	Finds per Day	Finds per Day per Hectare
Steeple Tye	27	0.26	0.023
Park Field	67	0.23	0.034
Kitchen Piece	10	0.19	0.067
Dog Kennel Field	17	0.14	0.036
Collets	1	0.01	0.001
Dock Hill	11	0.09	0.014
Spring Hill	0	0	0
Three Corner Tye	7	0.10	0.020
Black Croft	13	0.19	0.037
Sand Walk	42	0.13	0.016
Hut Field	0	0	0
Foxburgh South	0	0	0

Table A1.4: normalisation of the Rendlesham Middle Saxon metalwork dataset.

***c.* AD 850-1100**

Field Name	Total Finds	Finds per Day	Finds per Day per Hectare
Steeple Tye	6	0.06	0.005
Park Field	39	0.13	0.019
Kitchen Piece	9	0.17	0.060
Dog Kennel Field	10	0.08	0.021
Collets	9	0.06	0.005
Dock Hill	15	0.12	0.019
Spring Hill	1	0.48	0.167
Three Corner Tye	7	0.10	0.020
Black Croft	7	0.10	0.020
Sand Walk	8	0.03	0.004
Hut Field	1	0.02	0.002
Foxburgh South	1	0.03	0.002

Table A1.5: normalisation of the Rendlesham Late Saxon metalwork dataset.

***c*. AD 1100-1350**

Field Name	Total Finds	Finds per Day	Finds per Day per Hectare
Steeple Tye	36	0.34	0.030
Park Field	92	0.31	0.046
Kitchen Piece	21	0.41	0.144
Dog Kennel Field	22	0.18	0.047
Collets	97	0.69	0.052
Dock Hill	79	0.63	0.097
Spring Hill	1	0.48	0.167
Three Corner Tye	76	1.03	0.208
Black Croft	20	0.30	0.059
Sand Walk	53	0.17	0.020
Hut Field	28	0.64	0.054
Foxburgh South	9	0.31	0.024

Table A1.6: normalisation of the Rendlesham High Medieval metalwork dataset.

Appendix Two – Deben Valley Survey: Fieldwalking Archive, Methodology and Analysis

The Deben Valley Survey archive is held by the Suffolk Historic Environment Record. The archive consists of 2,469 individual find sheets, fieldwalking records and distribution maps; the entirety of this archive was examined and plotted using GIS for the first time for this present thesis. These paper records have not been uniformly catalogued; while some of this dataset has been catalogued by parish, in many cases, the dataset from a single parish is catalogued under numerous individual archival numbers. In other cases, the fieldwalking dataset for multiple parishes is recorded under a single archival reference, while a significant proportion of the archive remains uncatalogued. The HER archive references for each parish are listed below.

Fieldwalking Methodology

The Deben Valley Survey took place over six years, with a 144km^2 block of land selected for investigation, centred on Sutton Hoo and the valley of the river Deben.[777] The survey was carried out by Newman alone, reducing the impact of recovery bias on the dataset. Throughout the Deben Valley Survey, Newman employed the transect method, with a 20m transect spacing used. Sites that produced Anglo-Saxon pottery were, however, subject to more intensive survey using the grid method, with a 25m grid spacing employed, as set out in Chapter Three. All archaeological material was collected during the survey, with the exception of burned flint and post-medieval pottery and ceramic building material, of which only a small sample was retained.

The results of this fieldwalking were recorded on a transect-by-transect basis on paper fieldwalking record sheets; each of these sheets was associated with a corresponding map, allowing the finds records to be located, an example of which is provided below (Figure A2.1). While such a method should, in theory at least, enable individual groups of finds to be located to particular transects within the survey area, the standard to which this spatial data was recorded was variable, and it is often difficult to ascertain the location of each transect within individual fields. It was for this reason that individual arable fields were used as the basic unit of analysis above.

[777] Newman, 'Deben Valley', 477-480.

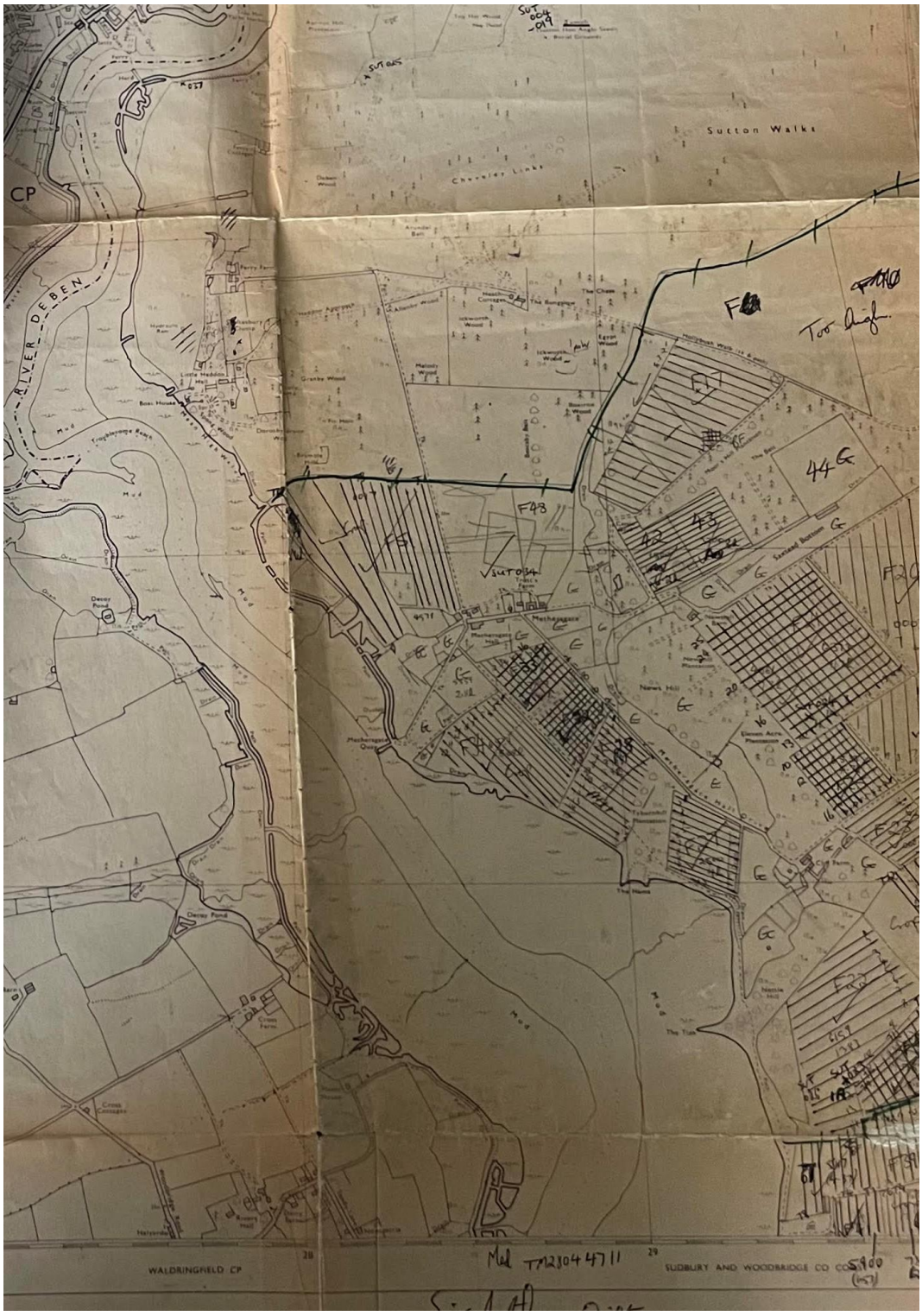

Figure A2.1: an excerpt from the field survey map of Sutton. Source: DVSA 33.

The Deben Valley Survey: Problems and Possibilities

As discussed above, the Deben Valley Survey proves an invaluable resource for understanding the landscape of East Suffolk, and indeed East Anglia more widely, and offers insight into patterns of occupation and exploitation at a landscape scale. The survey employed a standardised methodology, enabling clear and easy comparisons between individual sites; such standardisation allows hierarchies of activity to be understood. The fieldwalking was also undertaken by a single worker, mitigating against biases in the recovery of material, while the conditions in which the fieldwalking took place were also recorded, allowing the impact of environmental conditions on the recovery of material to be assessed. As all available arable land was fieldwalked, the Deben Valley Survey offers a somewhat representative insight into the historic landscape, although, as will be discussed below, modern patterns of land use may impact the distribution of material recovered.

There are, however, issues in the interpretation of this field survey data. While, as noted above, Newman investigated all available arable land in the survey area, patterns of modern land use, and the withholding of permission by landholders, resulted in sizeable disparities in the scale of the survey between individual parishes. While over 57% of the total area of the intensely arable parish of Burgh was fieldwalked, for example, the extensive heaths of Foxhall limited the area available for fieldwalking to some 3% of the total area of the parish (Figure A2.2 and Table A2.1). As much of this non-arable land use is concentrated on the interfluves, such variations in the scale of searching can clearly influence the patterns of settlement and landscape exploitation identified during the survey. The quality of recording of much of this data was also variable, inhibiting attempts to accurately locate finds within individual fields.

As suggested above, Newman employed the transect method throughout the Deben Valley Survey. While, as suggested in Chapter One, this methodology enables the rapid examination of large tracts of the countryside, there are issues with employing this survey technique, not least the potential for small, spatially restricted sites to be overlooked due to the spacing between transects. While the use of the grid method on individual fields goes some way to mitigating such issues, the use of this methodology presents further problems. As discussed in Chapter One, the grid method often recovers greater quantities of archaeological material than the transect method, overrepresenting the scale of activity in fields on which this technique was employed. As the areas in which this technique was employed are unclear in the fieldwalking archive, such issues cannot be mitigated against, although this is unlikely to significantly alter the results at the scale of the present survey.

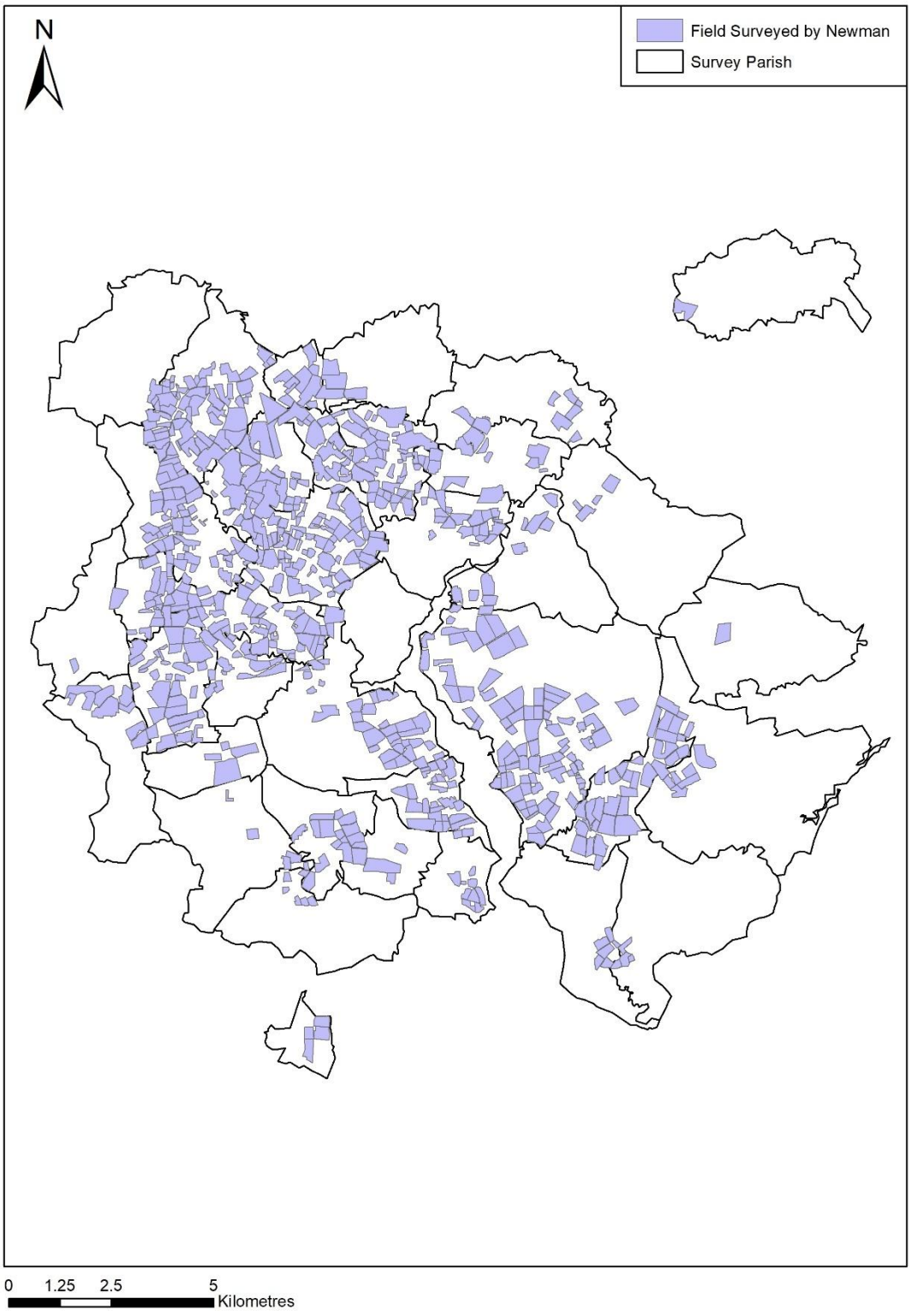

Figure A2.2: the fields surveyed by Newman.

While such issues have been considered throughout the above analysis, it is clear that the Deben Valley Survey Archive is inherently valuable, offering insight into the development of the countryside at a landscape scale; this dataset proves a solid foundation upon which the above analysis can be built.

Parish	Parish Area (km^2)	Area Fieldwalked (km^2)	Percentage of Parish Surveyed
Alderton	10.37	0.19	1.83%
Blaxhall	8.04	0.17	2.11%
Boulge	2.25	1.25	55.56%
Bredfield	4.49	2.41	53.67%
Brightwell	4.48	0.97	21.65%
Bromeswell	7.29	0.81	11.11%
Bucklesham	7.29	0.19	2.60%
Burgh	5.04	2.88	57.14%
Capel St Andrew	9.47	0.16	1.69%
Clopton	8.50	4.07	47.88%
Culpho	2.97	1.42	47.81%
Dallinghoo	6.37	0.63	9.89%
Debach	1.9	0.96	50.53%
Eyke	11.21	0.26	2.32%
Foxhall	7.48	0.23	3.07%
Great Bealings	4.17	2.14	51.32%
Grundisburgh	7.80	2.73	35.00%
Hasketon	6.75	3.60	53.33%
Hemley	3.02	0.43	14.24%
Hollesley	15.99	0.99	6.19%
Kesgrave	3.49	0.58	16.62%
Little Bealings	3.27	0.86	26.30%
Martlesham	10.52	2.19	20.82%
Melton	5.78	1.21	20.93%
Newbourne	3.67	0.68	18.53%
Otley	8.97	0.09	1.00%

Pettistree	7.28	0.79	10.85%
Playford	5.36	2.78	51.87%
Ramsholt	7.20	0.33	4.58%
Rushmere St Andrew	6.35	1.04	16.38%
Shottisham	4.56	2.73	59.87%
Stratton Hall	1.84	0.38	20.65%
Sutton	21.63	6.73	31.11%
Tuddenham St Martin	5.29	0.128	2.42%
Ufford	4.69	0.93	19.83%
Waldringfield	3.43	1.49	43.44%
Woodbridge	4.31	0.14	3.25%
Survey Area Total	242.52	49.57	20.44%

Table A2.1: the area of each parish fieldwalked by Newman. Source: DVSA 1-37.

The Deben Valley Survey Archive: Catalogue Numbers

For the purposes of this study, each parish surveyed by Newman has been numbered, with these numbers referred to throughout. DVSA 1, for example, refers to the archive for Alderton.

1. Alderton	SSF19786	SSF19875
SSF18068	SSF19787	SSF20056
SSF19604	SSF19788	SSF42350
SSF19610	SSF19875	SSF42352
SSF50158	SSF58572	SSF42354
2. Blaxhall	**4. Bredfield**	SSF56954
SSF18071	SSF11850	**5. Brightwell**
3. Boulge	SSF19514	SSF19689

SSF19690

SSF50006

SSF59524

6. Bromeswell

SSF18067

SSF18068

SSF19563

SSF19564

SSF19567

SSF37670

7. Bucklesham

SSF19874

SSF50006

SSF59435

8. Burgh

SSF19797

SSF19798

SSF19799

SSF19800

SSF19801

SSF19802

SSF19803

SSF19804

SSF19805

SSF19806

SSF19807

SSF19808

SSF20056

SSF20056

SSF42346

9. Capel St Andrew

SSF18060

10. Clopton

SSF19514

SSF19808

SSF19815

SSF19816

SSF19817

SSF19818

SSF19819

SSF19820

SSF19821

SSF19822

SSF19823

SSF19824

SSF19826

SSF19827

SSF19828

SSF19829

SSF19830

SSF19831

SSF19832

SSF19833

SSF19834

SSF19835

SSF19836

SSF19837

SSF19838

SSF19839

SSF19840

SSF19841

SSF19844

SSF19845

SSF20056

SSF42400

SSF42402

11. Culpho

SSF18068

SSF19848

SSF19849

SSF19850

SSF19851

SSF19852

SSF19853

SSF19854

SSF19855

SSF19856

SSF19857

SSF19858

SSF19859

SSF19860

SSF19886

12. Dallinghoo

Uncatalogued

13. Debach

SSF19861

SSF19864

SSF19865

SSF19866

SSF19867

14. Eyke

SSF18068

SSF19694

SSF50072

15. Foxhall

SSF50006

SSF59524

16. Great Bealings

SSF18068

SSF19567

SSF19749

SSF50158

17. Grundisburgh

SSF19885

SSF19886

SSF19888

SSF19889

SSF19891

SSF19892

SSF19893

SSF19894

SSF19895

SSF19896

SSF19898

SSF19899

SSF19900

SSF19901

SSF19902

SSF19903

SSF19904

SSF19905

SSF19906

SSF19907

SSF19908

SSF19909

SSF19910

SSF19911

SSF19912

SSF19913

18. Hasketon

SSF18069

SSF50006

19. Hemley

SSF50006

SSF59538

20. Hollesley

SSF50158

21. Kesgrave

SSF19950

22. Little Bealings

SSF50158

23. Martlesham

SSF11848

SSF11849

SSF11863

SSF18068

SSF18834

SSF19526

SSF19602

SSF19691

SSF50158

24. Melton

SSF19964

SSF19965

SSF19967

SSF19969

SSF19970

SSF19971

SSF19972

SSF19973

SSF19974

SSF19975

SSF19976

SSF19977

SSF19978

SSF19979

SSF19980

25. Newbourne

SSF59610

26. Otley

SSF19836

27. Pettistree

SSF11863

SSF11867

SSF19575

SSF20000

SSF20001

SSF20002

SSF57204

28. Playford

SSF19955

SSF20058

SSF50072

SSF59623

29. Ramsholt

SSF19571

SSF19572

SSF19573

SSF19623

SSF50158

30. Rushmere St Andrew

SSF19765

SSF42360

SSF59623

31. Shottisham

SSF11851

SSF19630

SSF19717

SSF20014

SSF50158

SSF59644

32. Stratton Hall

SSF50018

33. Sutton

SSF18004

SSF18052

SSF18067

SSF18068

SSF18228

SSF18229

SSF19512

SSF19513

SSF19564

SSF19566

SSF19567

SSF19568

SSF19579

SSF19657

SSF19687

SSF19688

SSF19754

SSF50006

SSF50158

34. Tuddenham St Martin

SSF59623

35. Ufford

SSF19964

SSF20023

SSF20024

SSF20025

SSF20026

SSF20027

SSF50072

36. Waldringfield

SSF50018

SSF59657

37. Woodbridge

SSF20029