

Witham Archaeology

A Report to TUP Properties

March 2016



**LAND EAST OF 6-9 LINLEY ROAD, WHITTLESEY,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE.**

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

N Jefferson

LAND EAST OF 3-9 LINLEY ROAD, WHITTLESEY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Site Code: ECB4640
Planning Reference: F/YR15/0790/F
NGR TL 27429 96761
OASIS ID: withamar1-244296

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

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LAND EAST OF 3-9 LINLEY ROAD, WHITTLESEY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

SUMMARY

This report presents the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation undertaken on land east of Linley Road, Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire. The project was commissioned by TUP Properties in order to provide information on the archaeological impact of proposed development at the site in support of a planning application to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

The site lies to the south east of the historic core of the village, within the spread of settlement, which extends to the east along the ridges of March gravels.

Only features of modern date were recorded within the evaluation trenches. Several of these contained ceramics of late nineteenth date or later which were retained for comment by a ceramics specialist but not for analysis

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation undertaken on land east of Linley Road, Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire. The project was commissioned by TUP Properties to provide information on the archaeological impact of proposed residential development on the site in support of a planning application to be submitted to Cambridgeshire County Council. Fieldwork was carried out between the 4th and 5th of February 2016, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by Witham Archaeology and approved by the Cambridgeshire County Council Planning Archaeologist.

The information in this document is presented with the proviso that further data may yet emerge. Witham Archaeology cannot, therefore, be held responsible for any loss, delay or damage, material or otherwise, arising out of this report. The document has been prepared in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists.

2.0 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY & GEOLOGY (see Figs. 1, 2 and 3)

The town and parish of Whittlesey, in the administrative district of Fenland, Cambridgeshire lies approximately 10km east of Peterborough. The proposed development area comprised an approximately rectangular, 0.13 hectare site located to the east of 3-9 Linley Road. The site is located to the southeast of the historic core of the village, within the spread of settlement which extends to the east along the ridges of March gravels TL 27429 96761.

The site is located on solid geology of the Oxford Clay Formation of the Jurassic period, overlain by March Gravels (British Geological Survey 1:50 000), at around 6.0m above Ordnance Datum

3.0 HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric

Archaeological investigations undertaken on the western fen edge of Whittlesey island have revealed abundant evidence of prehistoric activity, most notably relating to the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods. Recent excavations on the fen edge north of Whittlesey (HER 11047) revealed Bronze Age remains indicative of funerary activity, in the form of a small pit containing Beaker pottery and flints and a partial

ring ditch interpreted as a barrow. There were, however, no associated human remains to confirm the interpretation as a burial site. Bronze Age deposits were overlain by domestic settlement remains dated to the middle Iron Age (Murphy 2008).

Roman

Roman remains are abundant in the Whittlesey area, possibly reflecting its proximity to the Fen Causeway (CB 15033), a Roman road which traverses the island in the northern part of the town. Sherds of Roman pottery were recovered during archaeological investigations in the centre of Whittlesey, at the Post Office Yard (HER 01963) and at Manor View. Despite a lack of stratigraphic evidence the finds are indicative of nearby settlement.

Anglo Saxon and Medieval

An early reference to Whittlesey (here referred to as Witlesig) occurs in a charter of AD792, confirming a grant of land to Thorney Abbey (Sawyer 1968). The place-name probably derives from a combination of the Old English word *eg*, meaning an island, and the personal name *Wital* (Ekwall 1989, 515). In c. 1086, at the time of the Domesday Survey, land in Whittlesey was split between the Abbeys of Ely and Thorney. During the medieval period, two churches – St Mary's and St Andrew's - served the respective manors of Thorney and Ely. St Mary's Church (HER 02928) contains elements of thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth century fabric, having been rebuilt after a fire in 1244, while the earliest work in St Andrews Church dates to the middle of the 13th century (HER 14921). The site of Poor's Hospital (HER 02916), reputedly started by Adam Rypp in 1391, lies in the same general area as St Mary's church.

Seven Anglo-Saxon inhumation burials were discovered in 1828 in the northern part of Whittlesey. The burials lay on east to west alignments, accompanied by pots placed alongside the heads (HER – 10594). Residual sherds of late Saxon pottery occurred in many of the features excavated during an evaluation at Manor View in the town centre (see below). Medieval settlement remains have been encountered during archaeological investigations at several locations in the town. Between 1981 and 1983, excavations in the Post Office Yard, between St Mary's church and the market square, revealed nineteen pits and associated finds (HER 11910 and HER 01963). More recent work at the Old Post Office (an evaluation completed in 2008 – MCB 17978) revealed further pits, including an example which may served as a well. In 2004, an evaluation at Manor View (HER MCB15935), immediately southwest of St Mary's church, revealed walls, pits, postholes and other features associated with medieval settlement (Fletcher 2004). Immediately east of the evaluation is a Grade II listed Manor House (HER 02918). The building is mostly 17th century but retains some 15th elements. An evaluation undertaken in 2015 off Scaldgate approximately 250m northeast of Lindley Road identified several possible drainage ditches, a pit (containing late medieval and post-medieval pottery, post-medieval glass, and animal bone) and a large quarry pit

Elsewhere in Whittlesey, medieval features interpreted as probable rubbish pits (HER MCB17908) were located during an evaluation off Queen Street, together with an earlier, undated phase of pits, and later medieval quarries (House 2008). An evaluation in 2004 (HER MCB16704), at Grosvenor House, located a late medieval ditch, while work at Finkle Lane (HER MCB17814) produced evidence of activity spanning the medieval period, including possible burgage plots, domestic rubbish pits and possible leatherworking tanks. Medieval furrows (HER MCB17606) were recorded during an evaluation at Sir Harry Smith Community College on the eastern side of Whittlesey.

Approximately 200m to the west of the proposed development at Lindley Road, a two trench evaluation undertaken on land off Station Road in 2007 identified post-medieval dumped deposits and quarry pits (MCB17675) (Bradley-Lovekin 2007)

No archaeological features were identified during a 2011 evaluation on land at 32-33 Eastrea Road (ECB 3659) located approximately 200m to the north of Lindley Road. Similarly, evaluation of a site at 6 Inhams Road located to the northwest of the proposed development recorded only modern features.

4.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of the project, as set out in a Witham Archaeology specification were to:

- *provide information on the presence/absence, nature, date and quality of survival of archaeological deposits and remains which might be contained within the site, at the depth of proposed construction disturbance, and to assess the importance of such remains in terms of their local, regional and national context.*
- *assess the possible scale of development impact on any remains and provide information which might influence development design so that impact on any remains can be avoided or minimised.*
- *provide information that will allow the local planning authority to reconcile development proposals with their policy for preserving archaeological remains and make an informed and reasoned decision on the planning application.*
- *provide site specific archaeological information which (if necessary) would allow for the design and integration of timing and funding of any further archaeological work (or other mitigating strategy) which might be required in advance of or during any subsequent development programme.*
- *produce a project archive for deposition with the appropriate museum and from which the potential for further study and academic research could be assessed.*
- *provide information for accession to the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER).*

5.0 METHODOLOGY

The project specification provided for the excavation of two trenches, both measuring 20m x 1.6m (Fig 3).

All topsoil and overburden removal from trenches was carried out by mechanical excavator fitted with a smooth-bladed ditching bucket. Trench bases and sides were then cleaned by hand to allow characterisation and where possible dating of the stratigraphic sequence.

A record of the site was compiled through plans drawn at scale 1:20 and sections at 1:10, colour digital and monochrome (35mm) photographs, and individual written context records on *pro forma* recording sheets. Trenches were located in relation to fixed points on the site.

6.0 RESULTS

For ease of reference, the following account is presented on a trench-by-trench basis. Full context descriptions are provided in Appendix A. Figure 4 depicts an overall plan of the site so that features in separate trenches can be readily related to each other.

6.1 Trench 1 (Figs 4 and 5) (Plates 2, 4 and 5)

Trench 1 (c. 20m long x 1.6m wide) was aligned NE to SW and located towards the southern boundary of the proposed development. Natural deposits comprised mid yellowish orange sandy gravel (102). Sealing the natural was c.0.25m of mid greyish brown sandy clay subsoil (101). Cutting the subsoil were eight modern features (104, 106, 108, 110, 112, 114, 116, 118), which had near vertical sides containing a mixture to topsoil, subsoil and natural. Pottery, glass and brick finds from the features date them to the mid to late 20th century. Sealing the features was a 0.30-0.40m layer of dark blackish brown sandy clay topsoil (100).

6.2 Trench 2 (Figs 4 and 5) (Plate 3 and 6)

Trench 2 (c. 20m long x 1.6m wide) was aligned NW to SE and located towards the northern boundary of the proposed development. Natural deposits comprised mid yellowish orange sandy gravel (202).

Sealing the natural was c.0.15m of mid greyish brown sandy clay subsoil (201). Cutting the subsoil were three modern features (204, 206 and 208), which had near vertical sides and contained a mixture of topsoil, subsoil and natural. Pottery, glass and brick finds from the features date them to the mid to late 20th century. Sealing the features was a 0.15-0.30m layer of dark blackish brown sandy clay topsoil (200).

7.0 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Although the site lies to the southeast of the historic core of the village, the evaluation only recorded modern features dating to the mid to late 20th century. The features probably resolve as pits created in the back gardens of the current houses along New Road. Alex Beeby of Archaeological Project Services reviewed the material and commented that the pottery is of early modern date, with none earlier than the 19th century. Types include Early modern English stoneware, modern whiteware, porcelain and pearlware. There is also glass of 19th and 20th century date. The material is of little archaeological significance and can be discarded.

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author of this report would like to thank TUP Properties for their support in ensuring that the project was brought to a successful conclusion.

9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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10.0 PROJECT/ ARCHIVE DETAILS

10.1 Project Information

SITE CODE: ECB 4640

PLANNING APPLICATION No.: F/YR15/0790/F

FIELD OFFICER: N. Jefferson

NGR TL 27429 96761

CIVIL PARISH: Whittlesey

DATES OF INTERVENTION: 4th and 5th February 2016

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Trial Trench Evaluation

UNDERTAKEN FOR: TUP Properties

10.2 Archive Details

PRESENT LOCATION: Witham Archaeology, 2 High Street, Ruskington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG349DT

FINAL LOCATION: Cambridgeshire Archives

MUSEUM ACCESSION No.: ECB 4640

ACCESSION DATE: TBC

The Site Archive Comprises:

Context Records	21
Plans at Scale 1:50	GPS plans
Section Drawings at Scale 1:20	1 Sheets, three sections
Black and White photographs	14 frames
Digital Photographs	14
Set of Site Notes	0

It is intended that transfer of the archive in accordance with current published requirements will be undertaken following completion of this project.

COLOUR PLATES



Plate 1: General view of the site, looking south



Plate 2: Trench 1, looking southwest



Plate 3: Trench 2, looking southeast



Plate 4: Trench 1, Features [114], [116] and [118], looking south



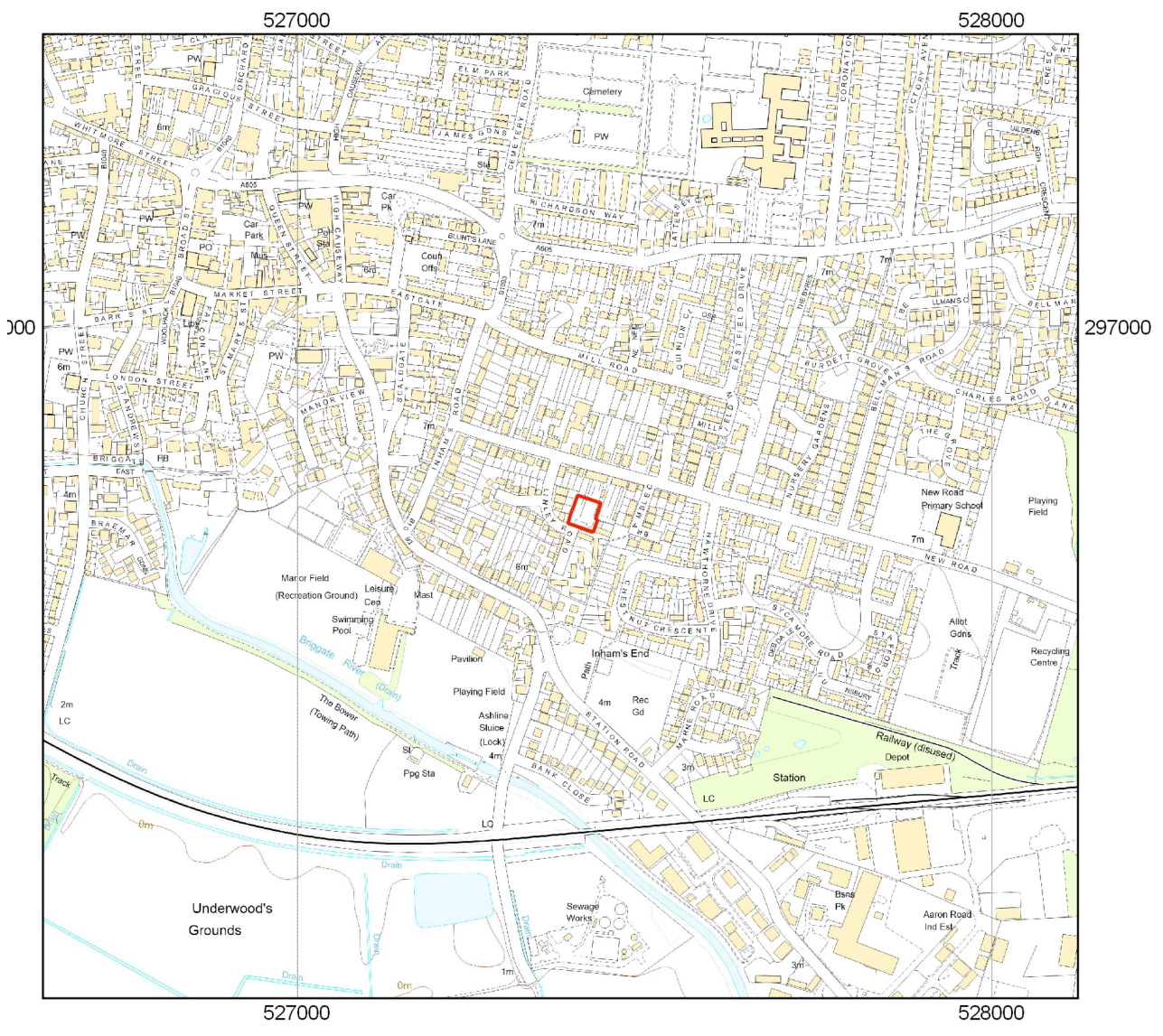
Plate 5: Trench 1, Feature [112] looking southwest



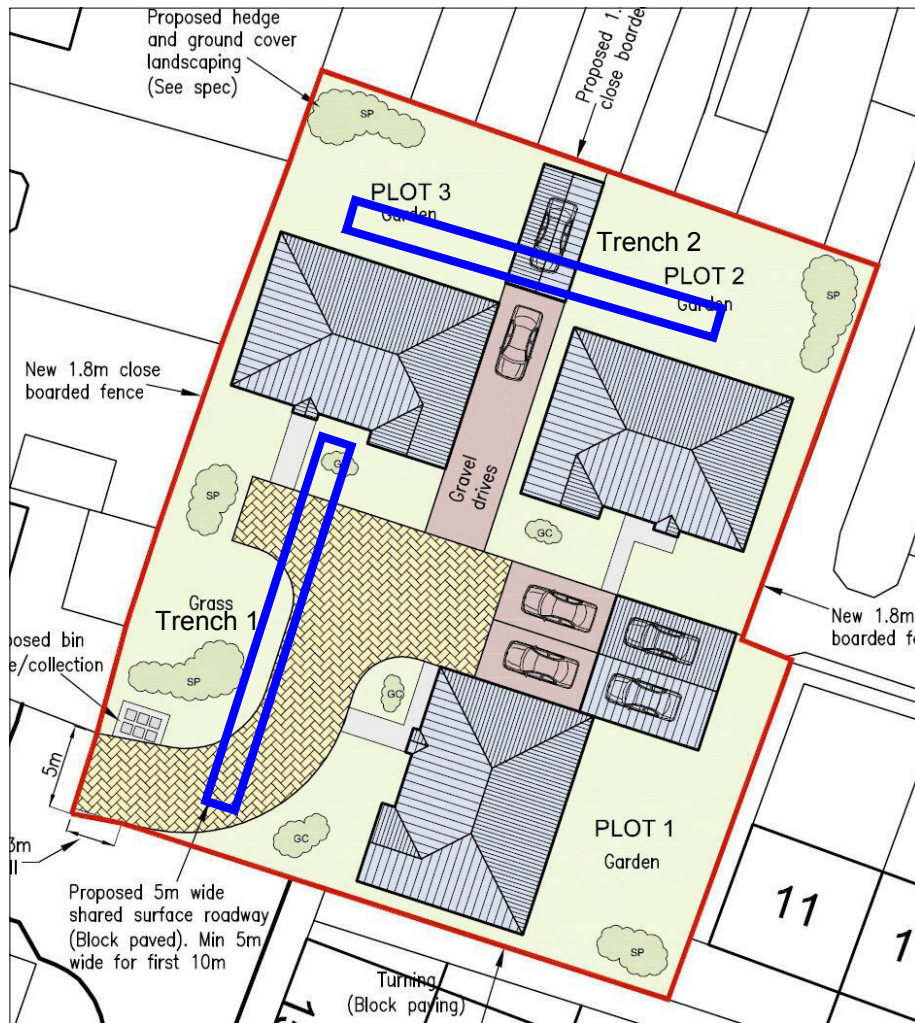
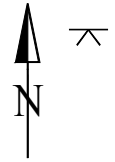
Plate 6: Trench 2, Feature [204] and [206] looking southwest



Figure 1 General Location Plan



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Background plan reproduced with the permission of Peter Humphrey Associates

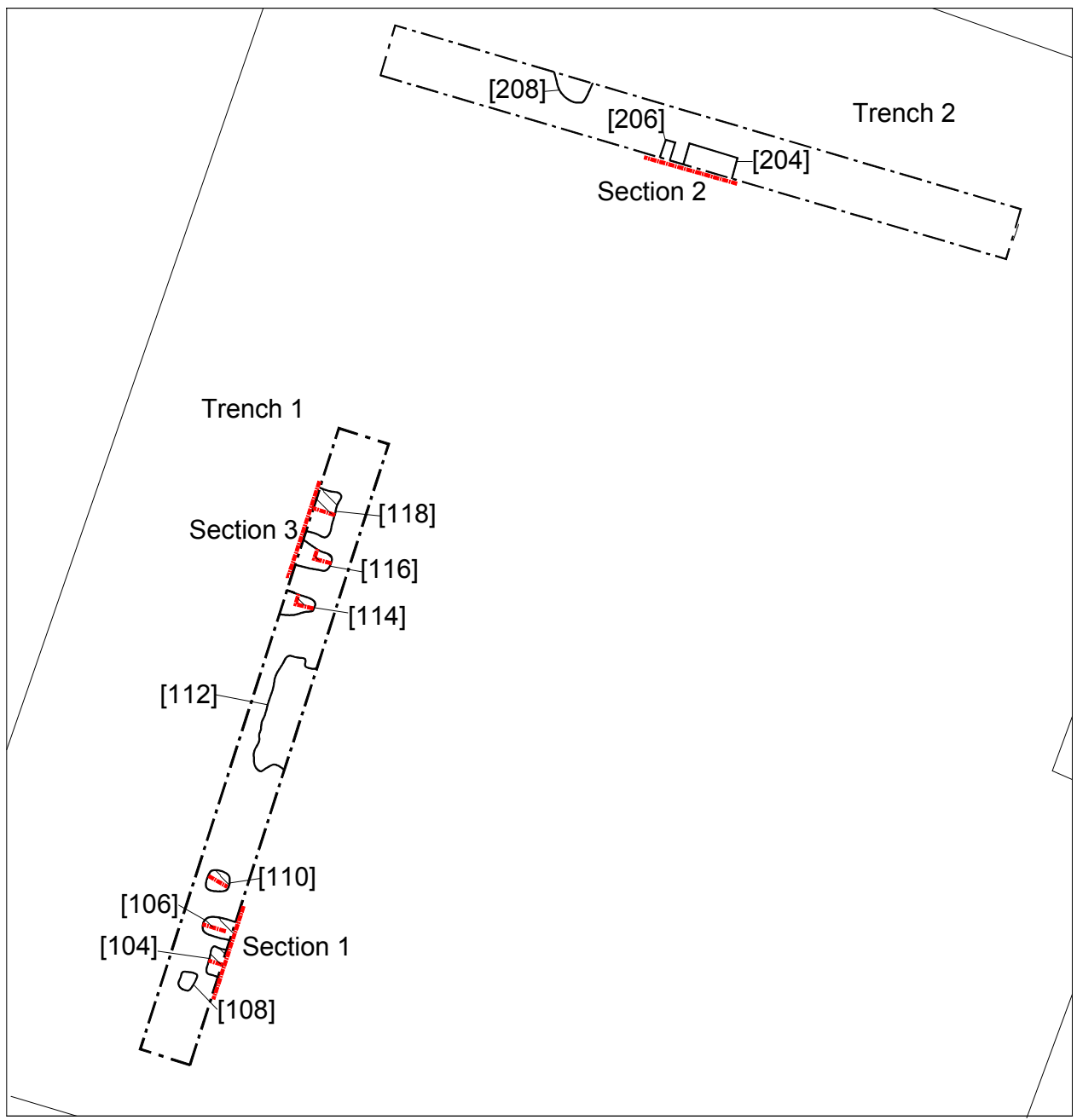
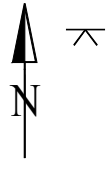
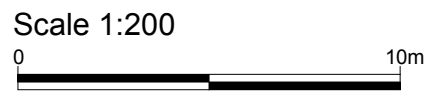
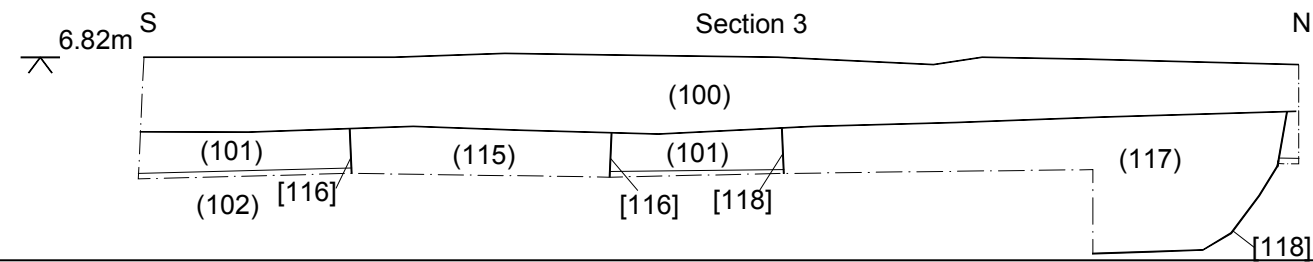
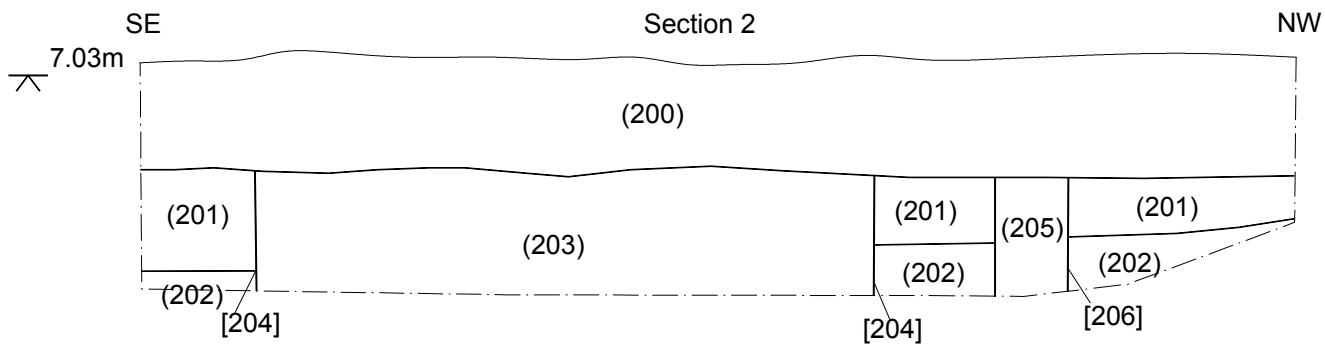
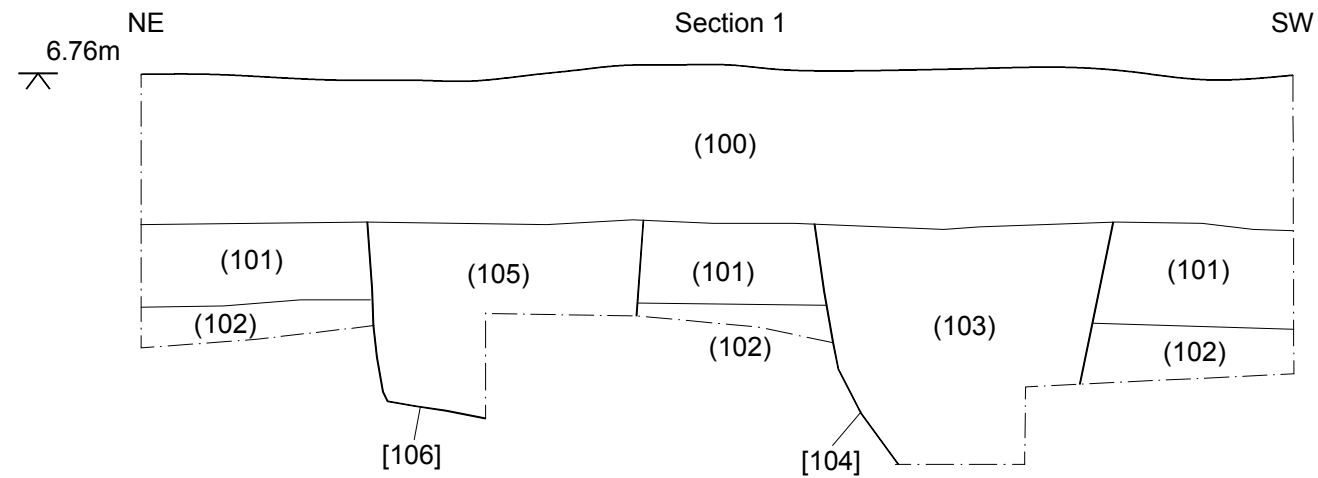


Figure 4 Trench location





APPENDIX A
CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context	Trench	Interpretation	Description
100	1	Topsoil/rubbish mix.	Soft, dark, blackish-brown, sandy clay mixed with modern building material. c.0.30m thick.
101	1	Subsoil.	Loose, soft, mid brownish-grey sandy clay with occasional small stones (silicate gravel). 0.20m to 0.30m thick.
102	1	Natural sands and gravels.	Firm, mid yellowish-orange clayey sands and gravels (March series).
103	1	Fill of pit [104] (sole) – modern dump deposit.	Loose mix of topsoil, subsoil, natural and rubble. Occasional pot and glass (20 th C).
104	1	Cut of pit – modern dump – possibly machine cut - probably same activity as [106], [108] and [110].	Sub-rectangular, with rounded corners, though limited by edge of trench. 0.70m wide (depth and length limited by excavation) with steep, slightly concave sides.
105	1	Fill of pit [106] (sole) – probably same activity as (103), (107) and (109).	Loose mix of topsoil, subsoil, natural and rubble. Occasional pot and glass (20 th C).
106	1	Cut of pit – modern dump – possibly machine cut - probably same activity as [104], [108] and [110].	Sub-rectangular, with rounded corners, though limited by edge of trench. 0.70m wide, 0.5m deep (length limited by excavation) with steep to vertical sides sharply breaking to a flat/slightly concave base.
107	1	Fill of pit [108] (sole) – probably same activity as (103), (105) and (109).	Loose mix of topsoil, subsoil, natural and rubble. Occasional pot and glass (20 th C).
108	1	Cut of pit – modern dump – possibly machine cut - probably same activity as [104], [106] and [110].	Sub-rectangular, with rounded corners, though limited by edge of trench. 0.60m wide, 0.70m in length (depth unknown as not excavated).
109	1	Fill of pit [110] (sole) – probably same activity as (103), (105) and (107).	Loose mix of topsoil, subsoil, natural and rubble. Occasional pot and glass (20 th C).
110	1	Cut of pit – modern dump - probably same activity as [104], [106] and [108].	Square with rounded corners, 0.7m x 0.8m (depth unknown as not excavated).
111	1	Fill of pit [112] (sole) – modern dump deposit (with concrete).	Loose, mainly building demolition rubbish, ash, brick, metal and concrete (poorly sorted).
112	1	Cut of pit – large very modern dump.	Sub-rectangular with irregular corners. 3.5m wide (length limited by excavation and depth unknown as not excavated).
113	1	Fill of gully [114]. Natural accumulation.	Moderately compact, mid greyish-brown, sandy clay. Course sand and 20% grit. 0.30m deep. Pottery retained.
114	1	Cut of gully – 20 th C. (possible boundary/drainage)	Linear 0.75m wide, 0.30m deep (length limited by excavation). E-W aligned. Concave sides with tapering base.
115	1	Fill of gully [116]. Natural accumulation.	Moderately compact, mid greyish-brown, sandy clay. Course sand and 20% grit. 0.30m deep.
116	1	Cut of gully – late 19 th to 20 th C. (possible boundary/drainage)	Linear 0.75m wide, 0.30m deep (length limited by excavation). E-W aligned. Concave sides with tapering base.
117	1	Fill of pit [118] (sole) – modern dump.	Moderately compact, mid greyish-brown, sandy clay. Occasional coal and modern debris 0.20m deep.
118	1	Cut of pit – large modern dump.	Rectangular. 1.3m wide, 0.20m deep (length limited

			by excavation). Regular sides, flat bottomed.
119	1	Well-structured brown earth type subsoil (late 20 th C garden cultivation).	Friable, dark greyish-brown sandy clay. Moderate silicate gravel inclusions (poorly sorted). 0.3m thick.
120	1	Natural rich subsoil.	Moderately compact, mid orangeish/greyish-brown, sandy clay. Gravelly. 0.10m to 0.15m thick.
200	2	Topsoil/rubbish mix.	Soft, dark, blackish-brown, sandy clay mixed with modern building material. c.0.30m thick.
201	2	Subsoil.	Loose, soft, mid brownish-grey sandy clay with occasional small stones (silicate gravel). 0.20m to 0.30m thick.
202	2	Natural sands and gravels.	Firm, mid yellowish-orange clayey sands and gravels (March series).
203	2	Fill of pit [204] – modern dump deposit.	Loose mix of topsoil, subsoil, natural and rubble. Occasional pot and glass (20th C).
204	2	Cut of pit – modern dump – possibly machine cut	Rectangular machine cut pit.
205	2	Fill of pit [206] – modern dump deposit.	Loose mix of topsoil, subsoil, natural and rubble. Occasional pot and glass (20th C).
206	2	Cut of pit – modern dump – possibly machine cut	Rectangular machine cut pit.
207	2	Fill of pit [208] – modern dump deposit.	Loose mix of topsoil, subsoil, natural and rubble. Occasional pot and glass (20th C).
208	2	Cut of pit – modern dump – possibly machine cut	irregular machine cut pit.

**APPENDIX B
OASIS FORM**

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: withamar1-244296

Project details

Project name	Archaeological trial trenching at 6-9 Linley Road, Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire
Short description of the project	This report presents the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation undertaken on land east of Linley Road, Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire. The project was commissioned by TUP Properties in order to provide information on the archaeological impact of proposed development at the site in support of a planning application to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The site lies to the south east of the historic core of the village, within the spread of settlement, which extends to the east along the ridges of March gravels. Only features of modern date were recorded within the evaluation trenches. Several of these contained ceramics of late nineteenth date or later which were retained for comment by a ceramics specialist but not for analysis
Project dates	Start: 04-02-2016 End: 05-02-2016
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	ECB4640 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	F/YR/15/0790/F - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	DITCH Modern
Monument type	PIT Modern
Significant Finds	POTTERY Modern
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE FENLAND WHITTLESEY 6-9 Linley Road, Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire
Postcode	PE7 1BB
Study area	0.13 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 26950 97240 52.557794162508 -0.127147919391 52 33 28 N 000 07 37 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 6.35m Max: 7.05m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Witham Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator	Dale Trimble
Project director/manager	Dale Trimble
Project supervisor	Neil Jefferson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Store
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Store
Digital Archive ID	ECB4640
Digital Contents	"Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Images vector", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Store
Paper Archive ID	ECB4640
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic", "Survey"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Map", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey "

Project bibliography 1

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