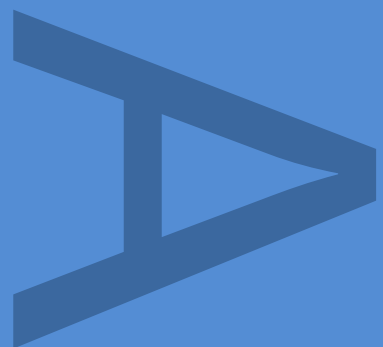


**49-51 STATION ROAD, HISTON,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE, CB24 9QL**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

DECEMBER 2011



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

**Archaeological Evaluation at Station Road, Histon,
Cambridgeshire**

Site Code: CSRH11

HER Planning Reference: ECB3657

Central National Grid Reference: TL 4400 6326

Written and Researched by Toby Knight

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, October 2011

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December 2011

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DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

Site Name
Station Road, Histon
Type of project
Archaeological Evaluation

QUALITY CONTROL

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited Project Code			K
	Name & Title	Signature	Date
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Abstract

This report details the results of a programme of archaeological evaluation undertaken during October 2011 on land off 49-51 Station Road, Histon, Cambridgeshire. The project was commissioned by The Strategic Land Partnership in order to inform an application for proposed development of the site.

Conditions for trial trenching were good throughout the programme. Some limited evidence for medieval pitting was observed within the site. Artefact densities were extremely low across the study area and consisted of a small assemblage of medieval and post medieval pottery and recent detritus observable in the modern topsoil.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report details the working methods and results of an archaeological trial trenching programme on land off Station Road, Histon, Cambridgeshire, undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) in order to inform an application for development of the site. The programme was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by PCA (Hinman 2011) in response to a design brief prepared by Andy Thomas of The Historic Environment Team (HET) of Cambridgeshire County Council. The fieldwork, undertaken during October 2011 was managed for PCA by Mark Hinman and supervised by Toby Knight.
- 1.2 The evaluation exercise has sought to contribute to an understanding of the character date and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed development area.
- 1.3 The planning application site, centred on NGR TL 4400 6326 covered approximately 1200 sqm, The elevation was at approximately 11m OD, and the local terrain sloped gently towards the east, and towards a watercourse 50m south of the site. The superficial geological deposits comprise a gravel sub-strata with a sandy sub-soil above.
- 1.4 The proposed development is for the demolition of existing buildings on the site (no.49 Station Road, and the vacant Bishops Cycles unit) and the erection of 4 new residential units on the site.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Station Road forms part of the road from Cambridge to Histon, and effectively that part of Station Road in which the site lies acts as a continuation south from the High Street. The site lies within a piece of land between two north-south roads (Station Road and Water Lane) that diverge from their junction at the parish boundary with Impington (just

south of the site) to service Histon and Cottenham respectively from Cambridge. Therefore the site is not located in the core of the medieval village, but lies 400m south of it. Post-medieval cottages that survive today show how ribbon development along this old route could have included the site within the peripheral envelope of the later historic village.

- 2.2 A previous study by SLR Consulting (SLR report 110510_406 0224900016_Histon_Arc_Assess_Rev2 2011) demonstrated that there were no known archaeological finds on the site. This study also highlighted the possibility that an ancient route might have run east–west through the village, along which archaeological remains consisting of Iron Age settlement and possible Romano-British activity have been found.
- 2.3 Archaeological investigations at Park Farm, Impington c650m to the south west of the site revealed a number of post built structures and associated pits dating to the Late Bronze Age, and a Middle Iron age curvilinear ditch (CHER MCB18077).
- 2.4 Late Iron Age and Romano-British period ditches, pits and settlement evidence was discovered at Unwins Nursery c.300m northeast of the site during investigations in 2009 (CHER MCB18457), and medieval field system ditches and quarry pits found c.300m away in the same direction at Impington Lane in 2005 (CHER MCB 16851). In addition artefactual evidence includes a single find spot c.600m to the north east of the site of a Saxon loomweight (CHER 5196) found during construction of Histon and Impington School in 1970.
- 2.5 An Anglo- Saxon loomweight is the only material trace of a pre-Domesday settlement..
- 2.6 Evidence for the early manors and churches is concentrated at the west end of the village. The site at No 49 Station Road lies approximately 300m south of the medieval core, located on the eastern side of the old road from Cambridge to Histon, and close to the parish boundary with Impington. Historic mapping and geotechnical trial pits do not indicate

any occupation on site, but instead suggest it may have been used for agricultural or horticultural purposes. The earliest OS mapping shows that the plot was not built up but was used as an orchard at this time (1887).

- 2.7 Geotechnical trial pits dug in 2006 in the garden of no. 49 Station Road, have demonstrated a sandy sub-soil of over 1m in thickness, lying beneath the topsoil and above natural sands and gravels the depth of which would seem indicative of agricultural use.
- 2.8 The SLR study concluded that the well drained soils and proximity to a water course to the south would have made the land easy for prehistoric as well as later tillage, and there is a high probability that the site would have been used for agricultural purposes throughout the history of the settlement.

2.9 As the site lies towards the core of the village of Histon there was considered to be some potential exists for the recovery of data relating to the development of the Saxon, Medieval and Post-Medieval settlement.

3 METHOD STATEMENT

- 3.1 Work included a watching brief during removal of the ground slab from the bike workshop and adjacent dwelling as well as linear trial trenching of a 5% sample of the development area following demolition of the existing buildings. This sequence of events allowed access for machinery to the rear garden and maximised the area available for trenching. A tree preservation order (TPO) relating to a mature beech tree to the rear of the development restricted the area available in the garden area.

Watching Brief

- 3.2 A watching brief during removal of the ground slab from the bike workshop and adjacent dwelling was undertaken on Monday the 3rd of October. The removal of the concrete slab did not impact below subsoil level and no archaeological features were revealed.

Trial Trenching

- 3.3 On the 10th and 11th October a series of 4 x 10m long trenches were excavated within the site, totalling a 5% sample of the development site. The trenches were spaced where conditions allowed, with the aim to sample the site for any surviving archaeological deposits. These were excavated by machine, using a toothless bucket, under archaeological supervision throughout.
- 3.4 All archaeological works were designed to minimise, as far as is reasonably practicable the environmental impact of trial trenching within the study area.
- 3.5 Trenches were cut through the topsoil to the interface with the underlying geology.
- 3.6 Exposed surfaces were cleaned by trowel and hoe as necessary in order to clarify located features and deposits. Trench spoil was scanned visually and with a metal detector to aid recovery of artefacts although nothing of archaeological significance was recovered on this occasion.

4 RESULTS

- 4.1 Trench 1 was 10m long, aligned north-east/south –west. Topsoil was present to a depth of 0.35m. Sub-soil was present to a depth of 0.40m.
- 4.2 The only feature present towards the south–west end of the trench was pit (Cut 2), sub circular in plan measuring 3.5m wide and 0.60m deep. Fill 3 was brownish grey clay silt containing 3 sherds of pottery dating to between 1660 and 1870.
- 4.3 Trench 2 was 10m long, aligned north-east/south –west. Topsoil was present to a depth of 0.35m and sub-soil was present to a depth of 0.25m.

-
- 4.4 A possible shallow quarry pit, Cut 4 was located towards the northern end of the trench and contained brownish grey clay silt Fill 5 containing 5 sherds of 13th Century pottery.
- 4.5 Tree throw Cut 6 truncated Fill 5 of pit 4 and contained dark brownish grey clay silt Fill 7 that yielded 11 sherds of late 14th Century pottery.
- 4.6 Trench 3 was 10m long, aligned north-east/south-west. Topsoil to a depth of 0.35m contained sub-soil to a depth of 0.20m. No archaeological features were revealed.
- 4.7 Trench 4 was 10m long, aligned east/west. Topsoil was present to a depth of 0.50m. Sub-soil to a depth of 1.0m. No archaeological features were revealed.

5 THE FINDS

POST-ROMAN POTTERY by Chris Jarrett

Introduction

- 5.1 A small sized assemblage of pottery was recovered from the site (1 box). The pottery dates from the medieval and post-medieval periods. Very few of the sherds show evidence for abrasion and so most of the assemblage was deposited fairly rapidly after breakage. The fragmentation of the pottery is as mostly sherd material and no vessels have a complete profile, although some forms could be recognised. Post-Roman pottery was recovered from three contexts and individual deposits produced only small (fewer than 30 sherds) groups of pottery.
- 5.2 All the pottery (nineteen sherds from the same number of vessels, weighing 269g) was examined macroscopically and microscopically using a binocular microscope (x20), and recorded in an ACCESS database, by fabric, form, decoration, sherd count, estimated number of vessels (ENV's) and weight. The pottery is discussed by types and its distribution.

The pottery types

Medieval

- 5.3 There are a total of sixteen sherds (236g) of medieval pottery and the pottery types are as follows:
- 5.4 Developed St Neots wares (DVPNT), 12th-13th centuries, one sherd, 1 ENV, 9g, form: closed.
- 5.5 Ely early medieval shelly ware (EMWS), 11th-12th century, two sherds, 2 ENV's, 14g, form: jar with simple rim.
- 5.6 Hedingham ware (HEDI), mid 12th-early 14th century, one sherd, 1 ENV, 7g, form: jug sherd with an abraded external green glaze.
- 5.7 Medieval Ely ware (MELS), 13th-14th century, nine sherds, 9 sherds, 9 ENV's, 93g, forms: a jar with a squared rim and a mottled green-glazed, oxidised jug sherd. Other non-diagnostic sherds are sooted indicating some of the forms (probably jars/cooking pots) were used for cooking.
- 5.8 Late medieval Ely ware (LMELS), 15th century, one sherd, 1 ENV, 3g, form unidentified.
- 5.9 Late medieval reduced ware (LMRW), late 13th-c.1600, one sherd, 1 ENV, 12g, form: probable cooking pot base with external sooting.
- 5.10 Late medieval sandy ware (LMQS), late 14th-15th century, one sherd, 1 ENV, 5g, form: unidentified.

Post-medieval

- 5.11 There are three sherds (126g) of post-medieval pottery represented by two pottery types:

Glazed red earthenware (GRE), 17th-19th century, two sherds, 2 ENV's, 111g, forms: unidentified, although a closed form is represented and the splayed base of a large vessel is noted.

Staffordshire-type slipware (STSL), 1660-1870, one sherd, 1 ENV, 15g, form: rounded dish.

Distribution

The distribution of the pottery is shown in Table 1.

Context	Trench	SC	ENV	Weight (g)	Pottery types	Suggested deposition date
[2]	1	3	3	126	GRE, STSL	1660-1870
[4]	2	11	11	81	DVPNT, EMWS, HEDI, MELS, LMELS,	Late 14th century
[6]	2	5	5	62	EMWS, MELS, LMRW	13th century

Table 1. CSRH 11: distribution of pottery types showing individual contexts containing pottery, what trench the context occurs in, the number of sherds, the estimated number of vessels and weight, the fabrics present and a suggested deposition date. SC: sherd count, ENV's: estimated number of vessels.

Significance and potential of the collection and recommendations for further work

5.12 The pottery has little significance at a local level. The assemblage is in keeping with the ceramic profile for this area of Cambridge with Ely wares dominating during the medieval period. The main potential of the pottery is to date the deposits it was recovered from. The pottery enables us to infer very little about the activities that took place on the site. None of the pottery merits illustration. There are no recommendations for further work on the pottery assemblage.

6 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Despite the proximity of the site to the street frontage no remains of previous buildings were present and in general little archaeological activity was noted.
- 6.2 A single feature interpreted as a possible small scale quarry pit observed within trench 2 (Cut 6) contained unabraded pottery of 13th century date and was cut by a tree root bowl containing 14th century pottery which would support a medieval provenance for these features.
- 6.3 The remainder of the small pottery assemblage was recovered from later contexts and is therefore residual.

-
- 6.4 The combined pottery assemblage was relatively small and although many of the sherds were unabraded the assemblage was very mixed. It contained a range of local pottery types rather than single vessels and probably represents domestic debris dumped by the villagers on the outskirts of the settlement rather than as domestic debris being deposited through manuring which would result in more fragmentary, smaller sherds.
- 6.5 The presence of archaeological features dateable to the medieval period attested to activity on the site during the 13th-14th centuries but the relatively low densities of finds within these features combined with the absence of any direct evidence for dwellings or buildings of any kind would seem to indicate a relatively marginal location in relation to core settlement at Histon during the later Medieval and early post Medieval periods.
- 6.6 These findings are consistent with the current understanding of the development of the village (Taylor, A. 1998) which places the site location on the outskirts of the village at this time.
- 6.7 The trial trenching sought to contribute to an understanding of the character of the condition, date and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed development area and has succeeded in this aim.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 7.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Jonathan Collins of The Strategic Land Partnership for commissioning the archaeological evaluation and Tim Malim of SLR Consulting. Thanks are also due to Andy Thomas of the Historic Environment Team, Cambridgeshire County Council for monitoring the fieldwork and providing advice prior to and during fieldwork phase.
- 7.2 The author would like to thank Mark Hinman for managing the project Sandy Pullen for work on site and for the GPS recording of the trenches, Josephine Brown for the illustrations and also to Chris Jarrett for the pottery assemblage report.

8 REFERENCES

Documentary References

Hinman, M. 2011 *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation at 49-51 Station Road, Histon, Cambridgeshire*. Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.

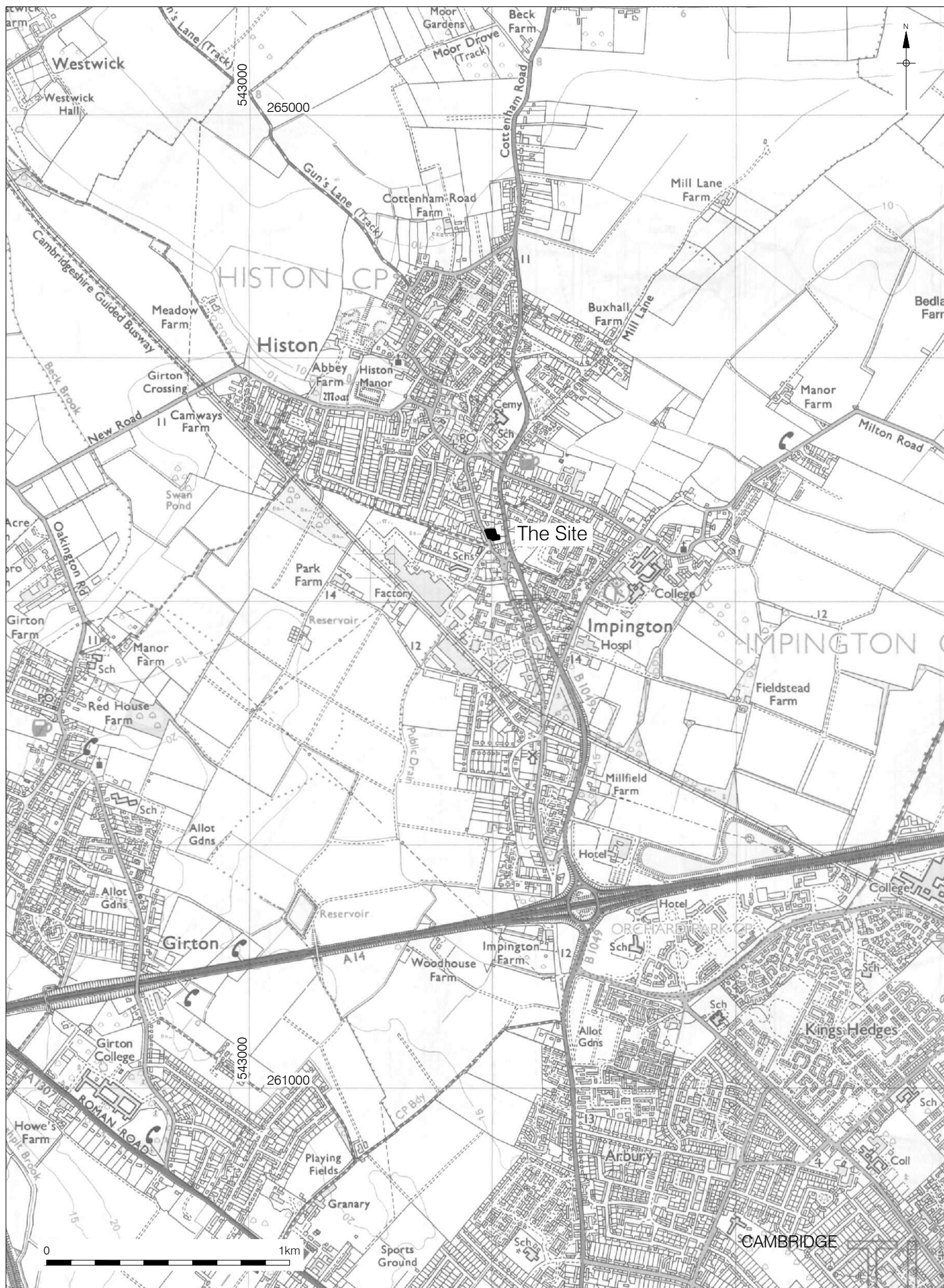
SLR report: 110510_406 02249 00016_Histon_Arc_Assess_rev2 2011

Taylor A. 1998 *Archaeology of Cambridgeshire Vol. 2: South-East Cambridgeshire and the Fen Edge*, 43-5, Cambridgeshire County Council

Thomas, A 2011, *Brief for an Archaeological Evaluation at 49-51 Station Road, Histon, Cambridgeshire*. Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Office.

Cartographic Reference

Ordnance Survey Map; Cambridgeshire and Ely (1886, 1:10,560)



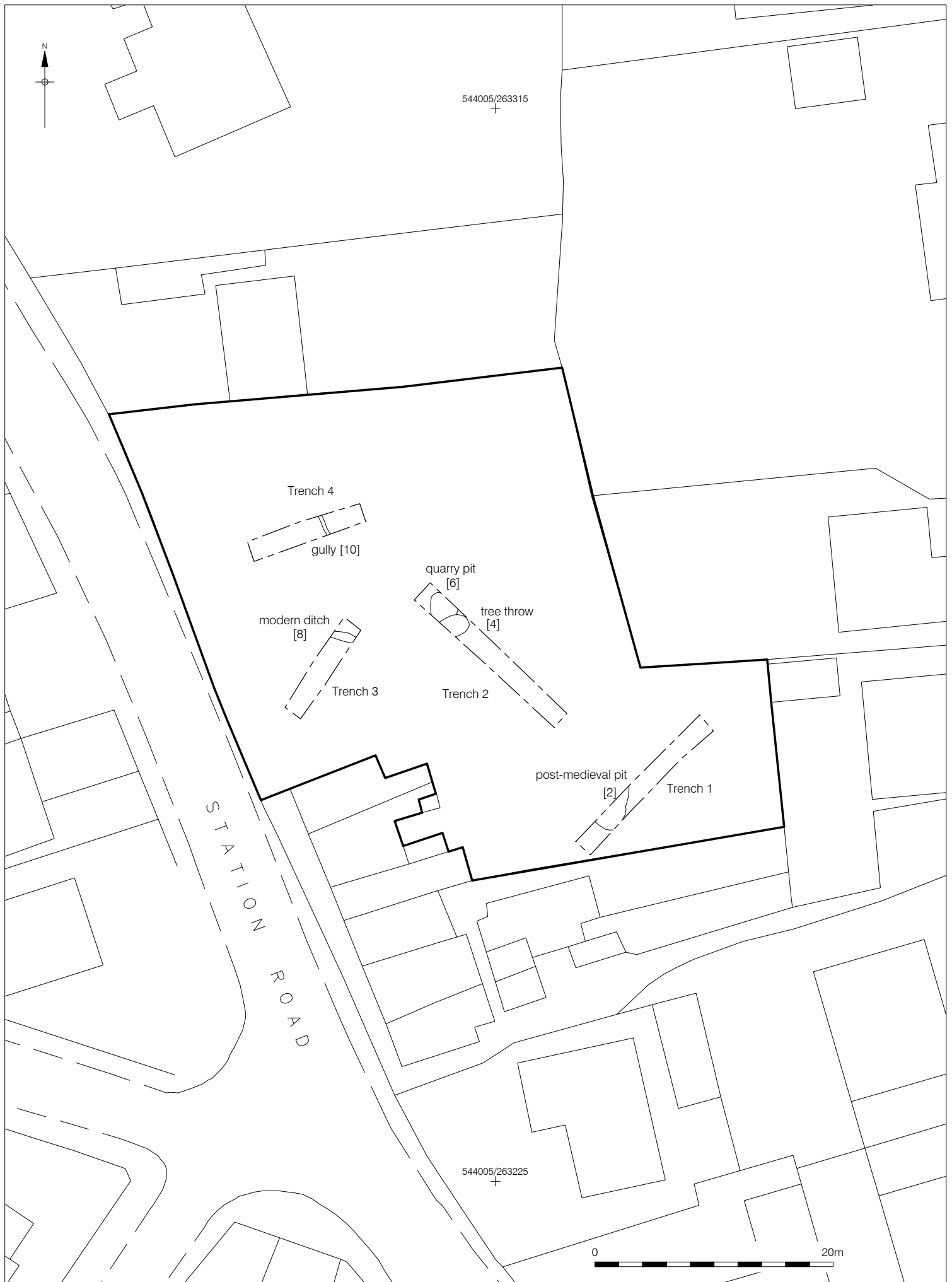




Plate 1: Trench 1, looking north-east



Plate 2: Trench 2, looking north-west



Plate 3: Trench 3, looking north-east



Plate 4: Trench 4, looking north-east

APPENDIX 1 Oasis Form

OASIS ID: preconst1-113107

Project details

Project name	49-51 Station Road, Histon
Short description of the project	Watching Brief and evaluation in advance of redevelopment. 4x10m trenches revealed a small assemblage of medieval and post medieval pottery in mainly residual contexts.
Project dates	Start: 03-10-2011 End: 03-11-2011
Previous/future work	No / No
Any project codes associated reference	ECB3657 - HER event no.
Any project codes associated reference	CSRH11 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 3 - Built over
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition

Position in the planning process	Between deposition of an application and determination
----------------------------------	--

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE CAMBRIDGE CAMBRIDGE 49-51 Station Road Histon
Postcode	CB24 9LQ
Study area	1200.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 4400 6326 52.2482308994 0.1095901409 52 14 53 N 000 06 34 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 11.00m Max: 11.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project originator brief	CCC Historic Environment Team
Project originator design	Mark Hinman
Project director/manager	Mark Hinman
Project supervisor	Toby Knight
Type of sponsor/funding body	The Strategic Land Partnership
Name of sponsor/funding body	The Strategic Land Partnership

Project archives

Physical recipient	Archive	CCC County Archaeology Store
Physical Archive ID		CSRH11
Physical Contents		'Ceramics'
Digital recipient	Archive	CCC County Archaeology Store
Digital Archive ID		CSRH11
Digital Contents		'none'
Digital available	Media	'Images raster / digital photography','Images vector','Text'
Paper recipient	Archive	CCC County Archaeology Store
Paper Archive ID		CSRH11
Paper Contents		'none'
Paper available	Media	'Context sheet','Plan','Report'

Entered by	Mark Hinman (mhinman@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	3 November 2011

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT REGISTER

Context	Cut	Tr.	Description	Type	Period
01		All	Mid – Dark brown clay silt	Layer	Modern (Topsoil)
02	02	1	Pit	Cut	Post Medieval
03	02	1	Greyish brown clay silt	Fill	Post Medieval
04	04	2	Pit	Cut	Medieval
05	04	2	Very dark grey brown clay silt	Fill	Medieval
06	06	2	Tree Throw	Cut	Medieval
07	06	2	Mid greyish brown sandy silt	Fill	Medieval
08	08	3	Ditch	Cut	Modern
09	08	3	Mid – Dark brown clay silt	Fill	Modern
10	10	4	Gully	Cut	Modern
11	10	4	Mid – Dark brown clay silt	Fill	Modern

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