

**1 LATIMER CLOSE, CAMBRIDGE,  
CB5 8RP**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:  
CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL**

**PCA REPORT NO: R11592**

**SITE CODE: CLCC13**

**EVENT NO. ECB4146**

**DECEMBER 2013**



**PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY**

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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

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**Local Planning Authority:** Cambridge City Council

**Central National Grid Reference:** TL 4809 5913

**Site Code:** CLCC13

**Event No:** ECB4146

**Planning Reference:** 12/1598/FUL

**Report No.** R.11592

**Written by:** Mary-Anne Slater and Jonathan House  
December 2013

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**Commissioning Client:** Keepmoat

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**December 2013**

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## Abstract

This report documents the results of an archaeological evaluation of land at Latimer Close, Cambridge. A total of 50m of linear trial trenches were machine excavated, revealing a nineteenth century yard surface, possibly relating to the late nineteenth century Elfleda Farm, located immediately west of the site.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This document reports the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken at Latimer Close, Cambridge, CB5 8RP (Figure 1). The work was carried out on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2013.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by Keepmoat in advance of the redevelopment of the site into residential housing and flats following the demolition of the existing buildings. The site comprised a series of four semi-detached blocks of two storey modern (post-war) former council houses (or flats) built within a close. North and west areas of the site were laid to hard-standing and occupied by rows of modern lightweight garaging.
- 1.3 The site is centred on OS National Grid Reference TL 4809 5909 and lies west of Cambridge City Airport and to the south of Newmarket Road.
- 1.4 A written scheme of investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation within the proposed development area was prepared by Mark Hinman of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. (May 2013) in response to brief issued by Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council's Historical Environment Team (May 2013, Planning Application 12/1598/FUL).
- 1.5 The brief highlighted that the development was in the eastern part of the historic city of Cambridge, in an area which has previously seen little archaeological investigation. Archaeological investigation to the north-west has revealed burials, possibly of Saxon date (HER ECB1927) and was thus in an area of high archaeological potential.
- 1.6 The desk-based assessment has established that the site of Latimer Close was primarily agricultural land until the Ditton Fields Housing development in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 1.7 The work reported upon here was designed to contribute to an understanding of the character, condition, date and extent of any archaeological remains within the development area, and to provide a comprehensive appraisal of the significance of any remains within a local, regional and national context as appropriate.

## **2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

- 2.1 The underlying bedrock of the proposed site comprises a grey chalk bedrock. In the south-east parishes of the district the chalk is overlain, in parts, by glacial boulder clay, deposited by the retreating glaciers at the end of the last ice age.
- 2.2 The soils of the general area are of the Milton association (SSEW 1983). This consists of deep permeable calcareous fine loamy soils, often affected by groundwater. The area of the PDA has, since the 1950s, been part of a large housing development; accordingly little other information on the soil types is available.
- 2.3 The site lies on lower and intermediate river terrace gravels along the lower southern slopes of the Cam river valley and its tributary Coldham Brook to the east of Cambridge. The topography is generally flat, gradually sloping to the west with Ordnance Survey spot heights of 16m OD in the general area of the PDA.
- 2.4 The topsoil had an average depth of 0.23m across the site, and capped a deposit of subsoil, measuring up to 0.17m deep, in Trench 2. No subsoil was present in Trench 1. This subsoil comprised a light yellowish grey, sandy silt. Beneath the topsoil in Trench 1 and the subsoil in Trench 2 were two demolition layers which sealed a buried topsoil at 0.72m below the current ground level. This sealed a nineteenth century yard surface and the natural was present at 0.94m below current ground level.

### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Cambridgeshire County Council (henceforth CCC) maintains a database of known sites of archaeological or historical significance known as an Historic Environment Record (HER). Numerous HER records exist for the area surrounding the current site and the most significant are summarised below. The full set of results from the HER search are detailed in the desk-based assessment (Garwood 2013).
- 3.2 Evidence for prehistoric activity includes Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic occupation within the immediate area of the PDA, particularly to the north and west, Bronze Age cremation burials to the west of the site and extensive Iron Age settlement to the north and east of the site.
- 3.3 Roman occupation of the general area was on a considerable scale. The town of Duroliponte (later known as Cambridge) lies only 2.5km to the west of the site and other smaller Roman settlements lie nearby. The majority of the entries in the Cambridge HER within the study area relate to chance finds, and only a single site has been uncovered during archaeological investigation (CB 14647, site 22).
- 3.4 The Anglo-Saxon period is well represented, with metalwork, pottery, inhumations and ditches found in the immediate area of the PDA, particularly along Peverel and Barnwell Road.
- 3.5 During the medieval period the general character of the area was agricultural. This is supported by the lack of medieval finds or events close to the site. Most medieval events are focused within or around the village of Fen Ditton, which lies some distance to the north of the PDA.
- 3.6 Taken together, this previous work suggested that the current site had low to moderate potential to contain archaeological remains.

## **4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 The archaeological specification stated that a total of 120m of linear trial trenches were to be excavated avoiding the existing structures on the site. Due to constraints from standing structures on the site, and the presence of live services the trial trenching was limited to a total of 50m.
- 4.2 The trenching was carried out under archaeological supervision using a JCB type mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed in spits down to the level of the undisturbed natural geological deposits where potential archaeological features could be observed and recorded.
- 4.3 Heights above ordnance datum (m OD), and the locations of archaeological features and interventions were recorded using a Leica 1200 GPS rover unit.
- 4.4 Deposits or the removal of deposits judged by the excavating archaeologist to constitute individual events were each assigned a context numbers and recorded on individual pre-printed forms. Archaeological events recognised by the deposition of material are signified in this report by round brackets (thus), whilst events constituting the removal of deposits are referred to here as 'cuts' and signified by square brackets [thus]. The record numbers assigned to cuts and deposits are entirely arbitrary and in no way reflect the chronological order in which events took place. Artefacts recovered during excavation were assigned to the record number of the deposit from which they were retrieved.
- 4.5 Metal detecting was carried out during the stripping operation and archaeological features and spoil were scanned.
- 4.6 High resolution digital photographs were taken throughout the fieldwork, and were used to keep a record of the evaluation.



## 5 RESULTS

- 5.1 Trench 1 was orientated north to south and contained one feature [111]. The deposits within the trench comprised topsoil to a depth of 0.30m below the existing ground level. The topsoil sealed a light yellowish grey, sandy silt (102) measuring 0.17m in thickness. The layer contained brick fragments and modern finds, the type of brick and tile present within the deposit suggested the layer was associated with the construction of the properties which currently stood on the site.
- 5.2 Layer (102) sealed a further layer within the trench, the deposit (103) was a mid reddish brown, sandy clay, and measured 0.22m in thickness. This layer sealed deposits which appeared to be a former topsoil and subsoil, the uppermost (104) was a dark greyish brown, silty clay, sealing a mid greyish brown, sandy clay (105). The layers measured 0.16m and 0.09m respectively.
- 5.3 Feature [111] was located at the northern end of the trench and was roughly linear in plan, extending out of the eastern and western limits of Trench 1, the dimensions measuring 0.15m deep, 2.58m wide. The single backfill (110) was a light greyish brown, sandy silt, containing brick and mortar fragments, as well as a higher frequency of flints. The deposit within the cut had the appearance of a metalled surface.
- 5.4 Trench 2 was aligned east-west and measured 20m in length, the trench was located in the former back gardens of the standing properties.
- 5.5 Layers of made ground were also present within Trench 2, modern topsoil and a subsoil material were the uppermost deposits, measuring 0.25m and 0.1m respectively. The subsoil sealed (102), the same material seen within Trench 1, the layer measured 0.18m within the trench. Below this layer was a mid reddish brown, sandy clay (108) measuring 0.15m in thickness, the layer may be the same as (103) although the deposit contained a much higher frequency of demolition materials, including iron objects, brick fragments and tile. This layer sealed a highly compacted clinker surface (109), the surface was extended across the western half of the trench. The deposit contained various large metal objects, in addition to small iron objects including nails. Frequent small fragments of both pottery and glass were seen throughout the layer, although finds relating to domestic waste were less frequent.
- 5.6 Directly below the clinker surface was evidence for a repeat of the buried former topsoil (104) and subsoil (105) seen within Trench 1, measuring 0.1m and 0.08m in depth.

## **6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 The two trenches excavated within the development area both showed evidence for made ground, and considerable soil movements. Evidence for a former land surface was seen in both the trenches, in the form of buried former topsoil and subsoil deposits, (104) and (105). Partial truncation of the buried topsoil (104) was seen within both trenches, however these deposits and the underlying natural deposits appeared to be largely undisturbed.
- 6.2 The clinker surface seen within Trench 2, as well as the metallated surface surviving in Trench 1 suggests some form of occupation or use for the site during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A yard surface or working area appears to have been established, possibly relating to the late nineteenth century Elfleda Farm, located immediately west of the site; identified within the previous Desk Based Assessment (Garwood 2013). The subsequent layers and made ground identified within the trenches is likely to be a result of the demolition of the prior farmstead and the construction of the housing currently standing on the site.
- 6.3 No archaeologically significant features or deposits were seen in the two trenches, no finds earlier than a late post medieval date were recovered from any of the excavated deposits.

## **7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 7.1 PCA would like to thank Keepmoat for funding and commissioning the works. The site was staffed by Mary-Anne Slater and Jonathan House, the project was managed by Mark Hinman. Dan McConnell of Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team monitored the site.

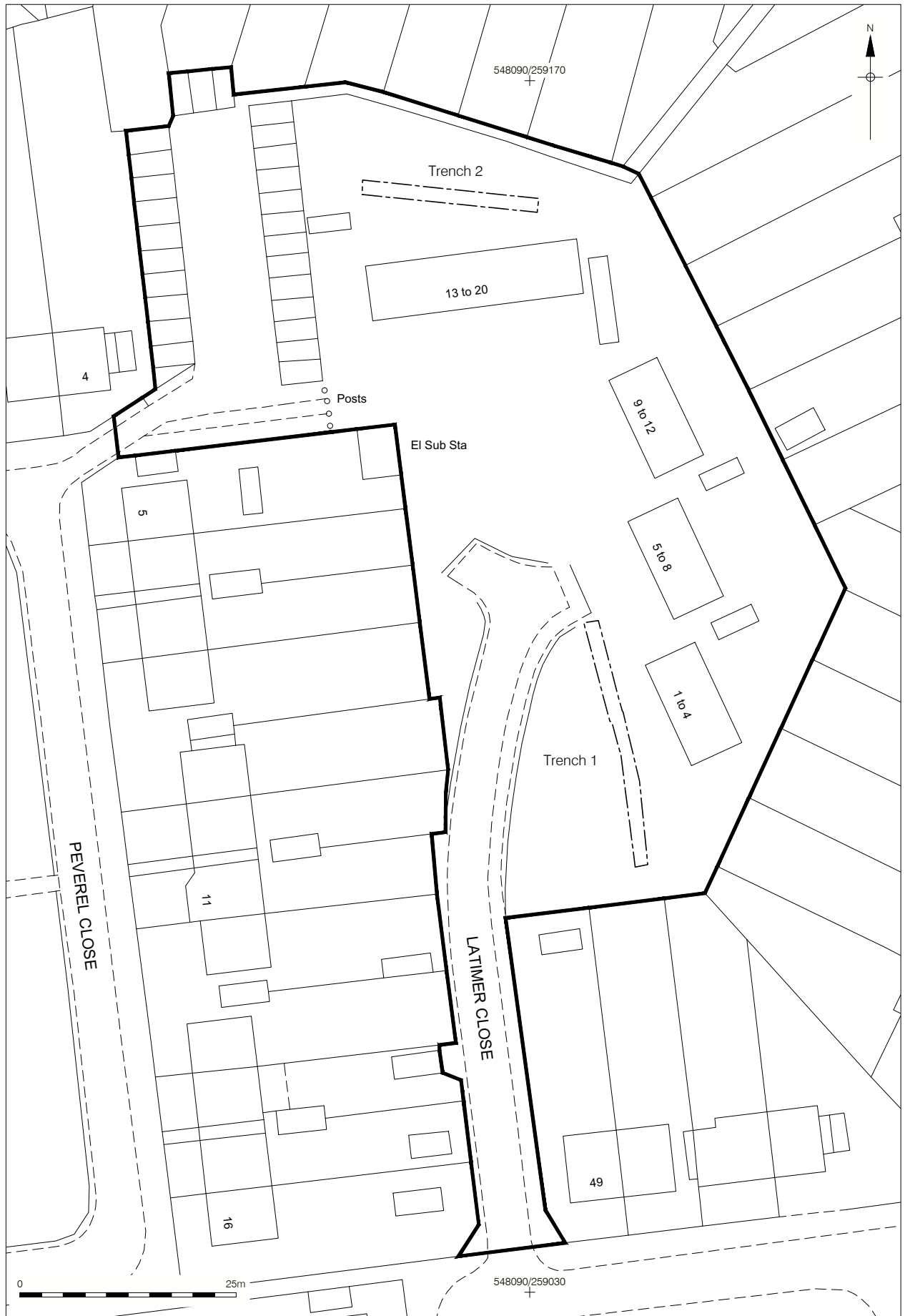
## **8 REFERENCES**

Garwood, A. 2013 Land at Latimer Close, Cambridge CB5 8RN An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment PCA Report No. 11425



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Figure 1  
 Site Location  
 1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2  
 Trench Location  
 1:625 at A4

## APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Context No.	Cut	Type	Description	Finds?
101	101	Cut of Ditch	NW-SE aligned, with shallow sides and a flat base. 0.67m wide by 0.16m deep.	n/a
102	102	Cut of Ditch	NW-SE aligned ditch, 1.08m wide and 0.48m deep. Moderately steep sides with a flat base.	n/a
103	103	Cut of Ditch	NE-SW aligned. 1.04m wide by 0.28m deep. Steep sides with a flat base	n/a
104	104	Cut of Ditch	NW-SE aligned. 0.66m wide by 0.16m deep. Shallow sides with a flat base	n/a
105	101	Single fill of Ditch	Firm orange-brown silty clay with moderate flint and chalk inclusions	x
106	103	Upper fill of Ditch	Very compacted orange red-brown silty clay with rare to occasional small flint inclusions	x
107	103	Mid fill of Ditch	Compacted dark grey-brown silty clay with moderate small flint inclusions. Small assemblage of burnt flint	7 burnt flints (127g)
108	103	Lower fill of Ditch	Firm orange-brown clay with occasional flint and chalk inclusions	x
109	104	Single fill of Ditch	Firm red/orange-brown silty clay with rare chalk inclusions.	x
110	n/a	Subsoil	Orange reddy-brown very firm silty clay measuring between 0.21-0.22m in depth.	x
111	102	Upper fill of Ditch	Red-brown firm silty clay with moderate to common chalk lumps. Two sherds of pottery recovered	2 sherds of RB pot (28g), 1x Animal bone
112	102	Lower fill of Ditch	Dark red brown firm silty clay, occasional small flint inclusions. 4 sherds of pottery	4 x RB pot (14g)

## APPENDIX 2: PLATES



Plate: 1. Shot of Trench 1, taken from north.



Plate: 2. Shot of Trench 2 taken from east.





Plate: 3. Stratified deposits within Trench 2, showing (109) yard surface, taken from north.

## APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

### 9 OASIS ID: preconst1-167302

#### Project details

Project name	1 LATIMER CLOSE, CAMBRIDGE, CB5 8RP
Short description of the project	This report documents the results of an archaeological evaluation of land at Latimer Close, Cambridge. A total of 50m of linear trial trenches were machine excavated, revealing a nineteenth century yard surface, possibly relating to the late nineteenth century Elfleda Farm, located immediately west of the site.
Project dates	Start: 12-12-2013 End: 12-12-2013
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	CLCC13 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	YARD Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POT Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

#### Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE CAMBRIDGE CAMBRIDGE 1 LATIMER CLOSE, CAMBRIDGE, CB5 8RP
Postcode	CB5 8RP
Study area	4394.91 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 4809 5913 52 0 52 12 36 N 000 10 03 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown

Height OD / Depth Min: 16.00m Max: 17.00m

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#### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	Dan McConnell
Project design originator	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project director/manager	Mark Hinman
Project supervisor	Jonathan House
Type of sponsor/funding body	Keepmoat
Type of sponsor/funding body	Building contractor
Name of sponsor/funding body	Keepmoat

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#### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
Physical Archive ID	CLCC13
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
Digital Archive ID	CLCC13
Digital Media available	"Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
Paper Archive ID	CLCC13
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey "

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Entered by	Jonathan House (JHouse@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	20 December 2013

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