

**LAND AT NO.1 BURY ROAD,
RAMSEY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

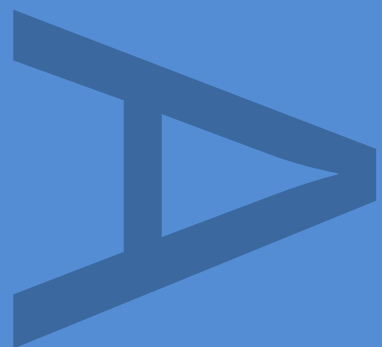
**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:
HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

PCA REPORT NO: R11639

SITE CODE: CBRR14

FEBRUARY 2014

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

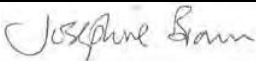
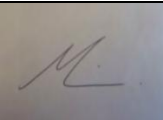


LAND AT NO.1 BURY ROAD,
RAMSEY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd		
Project Number		K3410
Report Number		11639

	Name & Title	Signature	Date
Text Prepared by:	Tom Woolhouse		February 2014
Graphics Prepared by:	Jennifer Simonson		February 2014
Graphics Checked by:	Josephine Brown		February 2014
Project Manager Sign-off:	Mark Hinman		February 2014

Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
The Granary
Rectory Farm
Brewery Road
Pampisford
Cambs
CB22 3EN

Land at No. 1 Bury Road, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire:

An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

Local Planning Authority: Huntingdonshire District Council

Planning Reference: 13/00370/REP

Central National Grid Reference: TL 2841 8487

Site Code: CBRR14

ECB No. ECB4191

Report No. R11639

Written and researched by: Tom Woolhouse
Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project Manager: Mark Hinman

Commissioning Client: Cindy Cade

Contractor: Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Central Office
7 Granta Terrace
Stapleford
Cambridgeshire
CB22 5DL

Tel: 01223 845522

Fax: 01223 845522

E-mail: mhinman@pre-construct.com

Website: www.pre-construct.com

©Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

February 2014

The material contained herein is and remains the sole property of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd and is not for publication to third parties without prior consent. Whilst every effort has been made to provide detailed and accurate information, Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd cannot be held responsible for errors or inaccuracies herein contained.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	2
ABSTRACT	3
1 INTRODUCTION	4
2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	6
3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	7
4 METHODOLOGY	8
5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE	10
6 THE FINDS	11
7 DISCUSSION	12
8 CONCLUSIONS	13
9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	14
10 BIBLIOGRAPHY	15
11 APPENDIX 1: PLATES	19
12 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX	23
13 APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM	24
FIGURE 1 SITE LOCATION	16
FIGURE 2 TRENCH LOCATION	17
FIGURE 3 TRENCH PLANS	18

ABSTRACT

This report describes the results of a two-trench archaeological evaluation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on land at No. 1 Bury Road, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 2841 8487) on 19th February 2014. The archaeological work was commissioned by Cindy Cade in response to a planning condition attached to residential development. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the site.

The evaluation identified a small medieval (12th-14th-century) rubbish pit suggestive of occupation in the vicinity. This was sealed by a buried plough-soil, indicating that the site subsequently reverted to agricultural use. The results of the fieldwork enhance understanding of the medieval development of this part of Ramsey and can be characterised as being of local significance.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land at No. 1 Bury Road, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire, PE26 1NF (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 2841 8487) on 19th February 2014 (Figure 1; Plate 1).
- 1.2 The site is located in the southern part of Ramsey, to the south-west of Ramsey town centre, at the junction of Bury Road and Blenheim Road. It is bounded by Bury Road to the east and Blenheim Road to the north, with a late Victorian house to the south and Ramsey sports ground to the west. It is currently a grassed area with a small garage and a coach house (Plate 2), the latter presumably once associated with the house to the south, located in the south-west corner. It has a total area of 0.23ha. The general character of the area is residential, with a mix of late Victorian and 20th-century properties along Bury Road and Blenheim Road. The general age of the buildings increases further north along Bury Road, which becomes Ramsey High Street.
- 1.3 The archaeological work was commissioned by Cindy Cade in response to an archaeological planning condition attached to the construction of a new house and the extension of the Victorian coach house to form a second new dwelling, with associated access, car-parking and landscaping (Planning Reference 13/00370/REP).
- 1.4 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Mark Hinman of PCA (Hinman 2014) in response to a Brief for archaeological evaluation from Dan McConnell of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (McConnell 2013).
- 1.5 The aim of the evaluation was to determine the location, date, extent, character, condition and quality of any archaeological remains on the site, to assess the significance of any such remains in a local, regional, or national context, as appropriate, and to assess the potential impact of the development proposals on the site's archaeology.

- 1.6 Two 20m long trial trenches were excavated and recorded on 19th February 2014, totalling 40m. A single medieval rubbish pit was revealed.
- 1.7 This report describes the results of the evaluation and aims to inform the design of an appropriate archaeological mitigation strategy. The site archive will be deposited at Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 2.1 The geology of the site is Oxford Clay, overlain by glacial till (British Geological Survey 2014; Website 1). In the trial trenches, the glacial till (5) was a mid to dark orangey-brown clay with rare small flints, moderate gravel inclusions and occasional pockets of pale grey clay, present at a fairly uniform depth of 0.60-0.70m below modern ground level.
- 2.2 The site is at an elevation of between 6m and 7.5m above Ordnance Datum (OD), sloping down slightly to the north-east (Figure 1). Ramsey mainly occupies a ridge of high ground (relative to the surrounding landscape) which projects north-eastwards into the fen. Before fen drainage, Ramsey was an 'island' surrounded by wetland to the north, east and south. To the east of Bury Road, the land slopes down towards High Lode, a stream.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site lies in an area of known archaeological significance, as recorded in the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 3.2 The historic core of the settlement at Ramsey, centred on the abbey, is situated on what was originally a gravel 'island', known as 'Bodsey island', surrounded by Bury Fen to the south, Hollow Fen to the east and Stocking Fen to the north. It could be approached only via a causeway from the west. The abbey was founded by Saint Oswald in AD 969 as part of a wider monastic reform movement. The abbot's park stretched away to the east of the abbey, and a settlement grew up to the west to serve the requirements of the monastery and the traffic which the abbey brought. Until the late 12th century, the settlement appears to have remained relatively unimportant. It is not mentioned in Domesday Book and was then part of the parish of Bury or Wistow.
- 3.3 The town had grown sufficiently by c. 1200 for a weekly market to be granted, held at the junction of High Street and Great Whyte (originally a navigable canal), and for an annual fair to be held on the green by the church. The town mainly occupies an area which is thought to have been reclaimed from the fen from the 13th/ 14th century onwards. This process of medieval reclamation and urban expansion is illustrated by the presence of a house of early-15th-century date at No. 6 High Street and the discovery of medieval remains along the High Street (HER No. MCB16323, ECB1861).
- 3.4 The site is shown as open, undeveloped land, possibly forming part of the town's sports ground, on the 1st Edition (1891) Ordnance Survey map (Website 2).

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The archaeological evaluation comprised two trial trenches 20m long and 1.8m wide (Figure 2).
- 4.2 Ground reduction was carried out under archaeological supervision using a 7-ton wheeled mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m-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. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by trowel as appropriate and all further excavation was undertaken manually using hand tools.
- 4.3 The limits of excavations, heights above Ordnance Datum (m OD) and the locations of archaeological features and interventions were recorded using a Leica 1200 GPS rover unit with RTK differential correction, giving three-dimensional accuracy of 20mm or better.
- 4.4 Deposits or the removal of deposits judged by the excavating archaeologist to constitute individual events were each assigned a unique record number (often referred to within British archaeology as 'context numbers') and recorded on individual pre-printed forms (Taylor and Brown 2009). Archaeological processes recognised by the deposition of material are signified in this report by round brackets (thus), while 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. All features and deposits recorded during the evaluation are listed in Appendix 2. 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 topsoil and subsoil stripping and throughout the excavation process. Archaeological features and spoil heaps were scanned by metal-detector. Only objects of modern date were found and were not retained for accession.

- 4.6 High-resolution digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits, and were used to keep a record of the excavation process.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

5.1 Overview

- 5.1.1 Trench 1 contained no archaeological features (Figure 3; Plate 3). A pit and a large pit/ pond were present in Trench 2 (Plate 4).

5.2 Medieval Rubbish Pit [9] (Figure 3; Plate 5)

- 5.2.1 A small oval pit [9] with steep to vertical sides and a flattish base (1.10m long x 0.76m wide x 0.40m deep) was located towards the south end of Trench 2. It contained a single fill of fairly loose dark brownish-grey clayey silt (8) which contained three sherds of sandy medieval coarseware (12th-14th/15th-century; see Sudds, Section 6.1) and flecks of oyster shell (one intact fragment). The upper part of the pit had been disturbed by later ploughing.

5.3 Buried Late Medieval Plough-Soil (4)

- 5.3.1 Below the topsoil in both trenches was a layer of mid brownish-orange silty clay 0.30-0.38m deep (4), which appeared to be comprised mainly of disturbed natural till and is interpreted as a buried former agricultural soil. Two sherds of 14th-15th-century pottery were present (see Sudds, Section 6.1).

5.4 Post-Medieval Pit/ Pond [7] (Figure 3; Plates 6 and 7)

- 5.4.1 A large pit [7] occupied the northern part of Trench 2, in the lowest-lying part of the site. It was cut through the buried plough-soil. The pit was machine-excavated to a depth of 1.10m. Fragments of yellow brick (not retained) were present in its dark clayey/ peaty fill (6) at this depth, suggesting a post-medieval date for the feature. Excavation ceased at this depth owing to the high groundwater table and subsidence of the trench edges. Feature [7] is likely to have been a clay extraction pit or in-filled pond. A piece of glazed Sunderland-type ware (19th-century) was present in the uppermost part of its fill.

5.5 Modern Overburden

- 5.5.1 The modern topsoil (3) had an average depth of 0.30m across the site and sealed the buried plough-soil in both trenches. A residual Cambridgeshire Sgraffito Ware jug sherd (14th-15th-century) was found in the topsoil.

6 THE FINDS

6.1 The Medieval and Post-Medieval Pottery

By Berni Sudds

6.1.1 The small assemblage of pottery from the site dates predominantly to the medieval period, although a single 19th-century sherd was recovered from context (6). With the exception of the late medieval Ely ware base sherd and the Sunderland-type ware dish rim, the pottery is fragmentary and abraded.

6.1.2 The coarsewares from deposit (8) are likely to be of local origin but from at least two different production centres and are probably not contemporary. A simple everted, slightly hollowed jar rim is likely to be the earliest of the three, reminiscent of Thetford ware jars, although the fabric is generally coarser than the range usually encountered and the forming fairly thick and crude. The two other body sherds are finer with sparse calcareous inclusions and are harder-fired, indicating a date from the 12th to 14th or possibly even 15th century. The Cambridgeshire Sgraffito Ware is a hard, fairly smooth, red fabric with the outer surface covered in a white slip through which designs were incised to reveal the underlying body. Both sherds from site are from jugs and have the remains of a clear glaze (appearing yellow over the white slip), one with some green speckling. This tradition is dated to the 14th to 15th century (McCarthy and Brooks 1988, 424-5).

6.1.3 No further work is recommended for this small, fragmentary assemblage.

Context	Description	Date
(3)	1x Cambridgeshire Sgraffito Ware jug sherd (4g)	14 th – 15 th century
(4)	1x Cambridgeshire Sgraffito Ware jug sherd (7g) 1x Late medieval Ely ware (69g)	14 th – 15 th century
(6)	1x Sunderland-type ware bowl/dish, mottled glaze (57g)	19 th century
(8)	3x Medieval sandy coarsewares (18g)	12 th – 15 th century

Table 1: Summary of the ceramic assemblage by context

7 DISCUSSION

- 7.1 The evaluation identified a single 'high' medieval pit [9] located in the south-east of the site, close to the Bury Road frontage. The pit contained domestic-type waste including pottery and oyster shell. This suggests low-level occupation somewhere in the vicinity in the c. 12th-14th century, the time when Ramsey is thought to have expanded into this area.
- 7.2 The pit was sealed by a disturbed agricultural soil (4) which contained late medieval pottery. This suggests that medieval expansion into the area was short-lived, with the land reverting to agricultural use by the 14th or 15th century. This area was somewhat outside of the main core of the town and the road south to Bury may only have had scattered dwellings along it even at the peak of the town's medieval development.
- 7.3 Ploughing could have destroyed shallower archaeological features and surface layers, so it is possible that other evidence of medieval occupation was once present on the site but has not survived.
- 7.4 A clay extraction pit or pond was later dug. Finds from its upper levels date to the 19th century, although the base of the pit was not reached due to the watertable and it could have been marginally earlier (it was cut through the buried plough-soil so is no earlier than c. 15th century). The presence of one or more ponds, or land-use for small-scale clay extraction, is in keeping with the site's depiction as open, undeveloped land on the 1891 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The trial trenches revealed small-scale evidence for activity during the medieval and post-medieval periods. There were probably dwellings somewhere nearby in the 12th-14th century but the land appears to have shifted into agricultural use by the end of the medieval period (c. 15th century).
- 8.2 The fieldwork has thus enhanced understanding of the medieval development of this part of Ramsey. The results are of local significance.
- 8.3 It is possible that other medieval remains were once present but were subsequently destroyed by later medieval/ post-medieval ploughing.
- 8.4 Based on the results of the evaluation, the potential of the site to contain further significant archaeological remains is considered to be low.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Cindy Cade for commissioning the work. PCA are also grateful to Dan McConnell of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team for monitoring the work. Ray Turner machine-excavated the trenches. Figures accompanying this report were prepared by Jennifer Simonson of PCA's CAD Department. The pottery was analysed by Berni Sudds.

10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

10.1 Printed Sources

Hinman, M. 2014 Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation of Land at No. 1 Bury Road, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire (unpublished, Pre-Construct Archaeology)

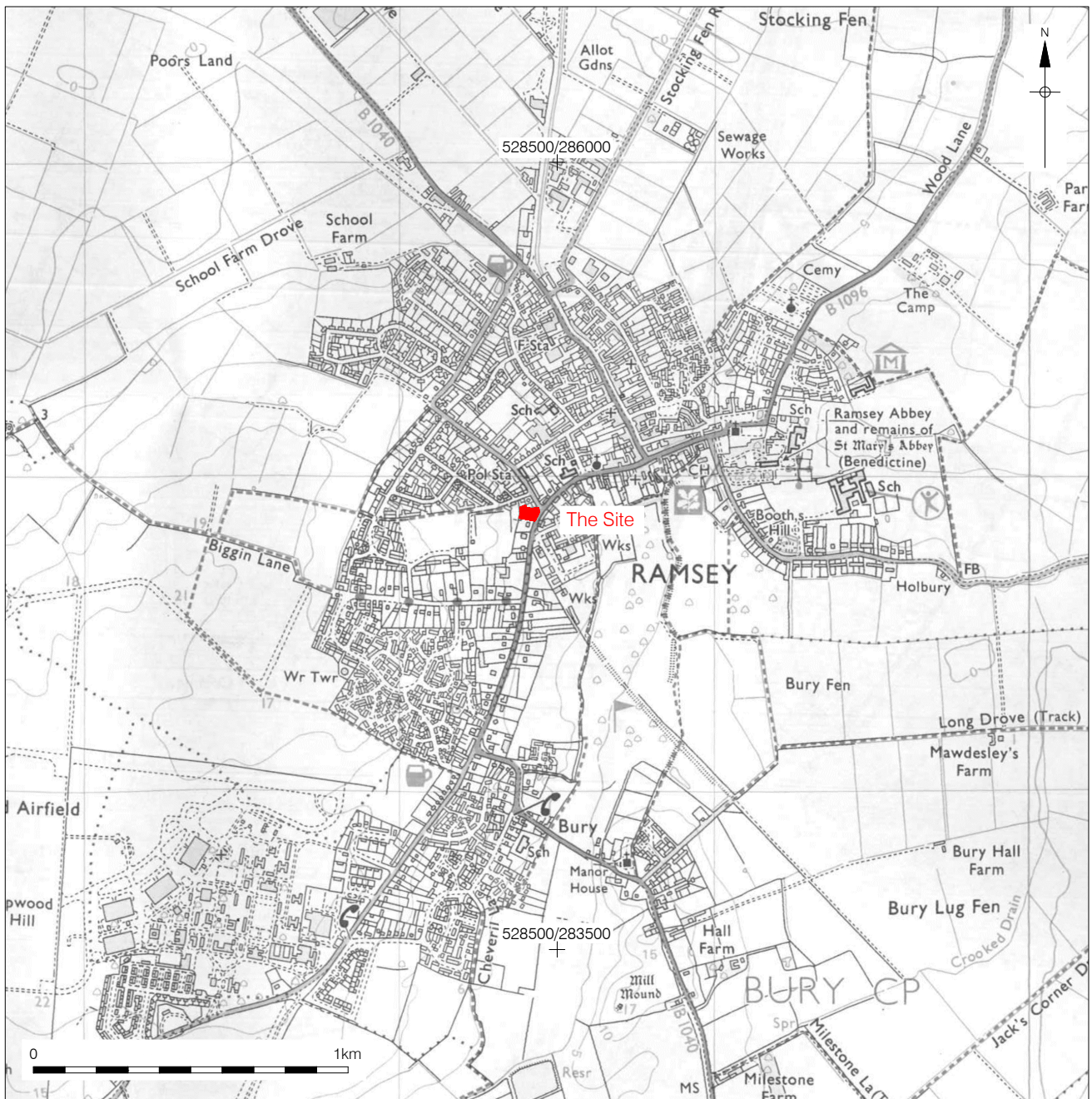
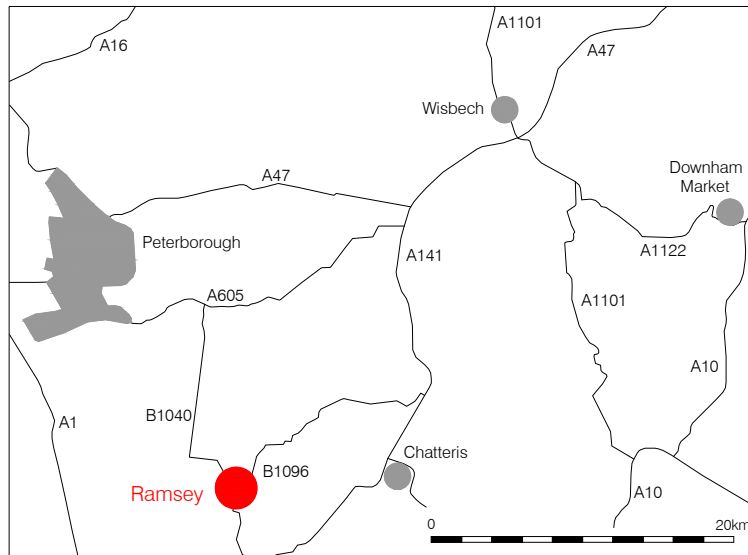
McCarthy, M.R. and Brooks, C.M. 1988 Medieval Pottery in Britain AD 900-1600 (Leicester University Press)

McConnell, D. 2013 Brief for Archaeological Evaluation: Land at 1 Bury Road, Ramsey (unpublished, Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team)

10.2 Websites

1) British Geological Survey 2014 Geology of Britain Viewer <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html?location=IP9%203DG>. Date accessed 20 February 2014

2) 'England - Huntingdonshire: 010/SE', Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 - Epoch 1 (1891). URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/mapsheet.aspx?compid=55122&sheetid=4082&ox=0&oy=0&zm=1&czm=10&x=316&y=339> Date accessed: 20 February 2014.

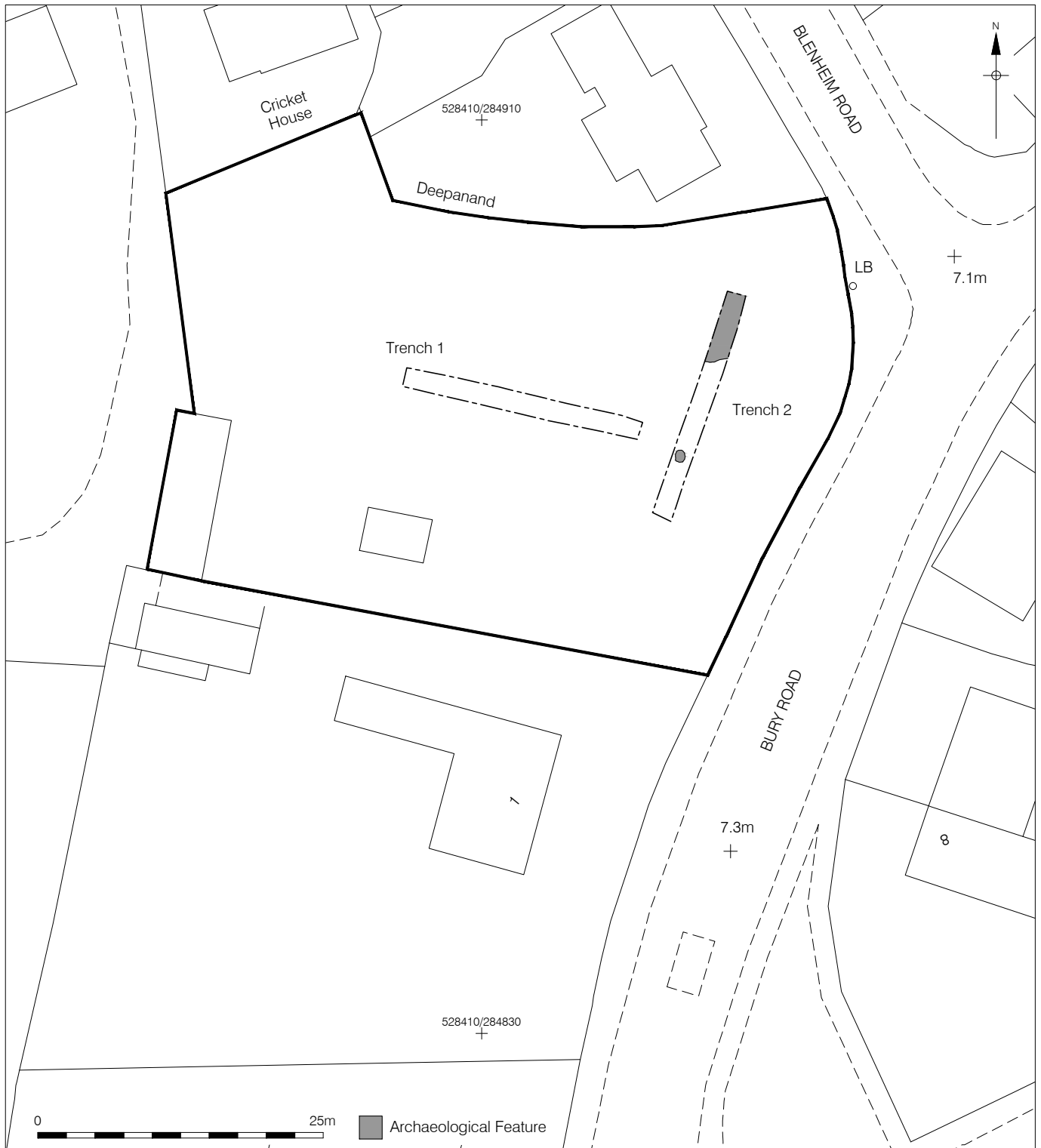


© Crown copyright 2006. All rights reserved. License number 36110309

© Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd 2014

25/01/14 JS revision 1

Figure 1
Site Location
1:500,000 and 20,000 at A4



© Crown copyright 2014. All rights reserved. License number PMP36110309

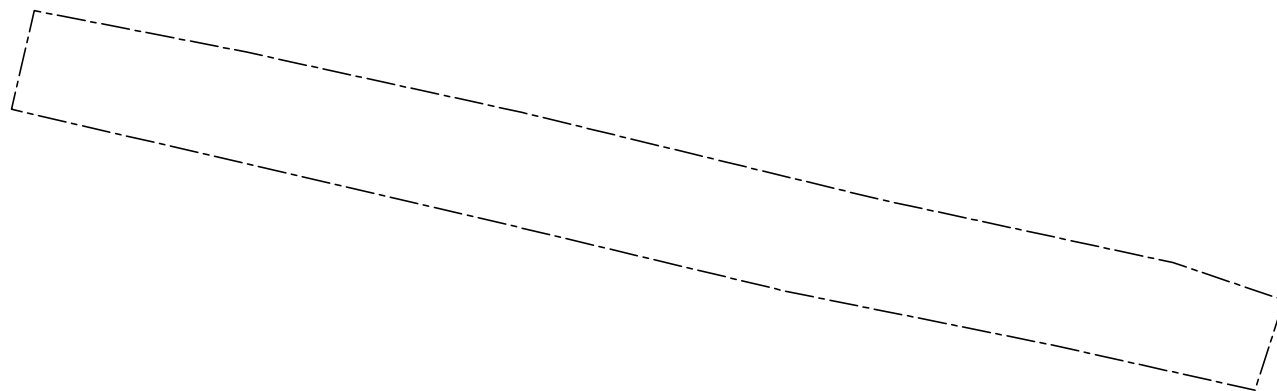
© Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd 2014

25/01/14 JS revision 1

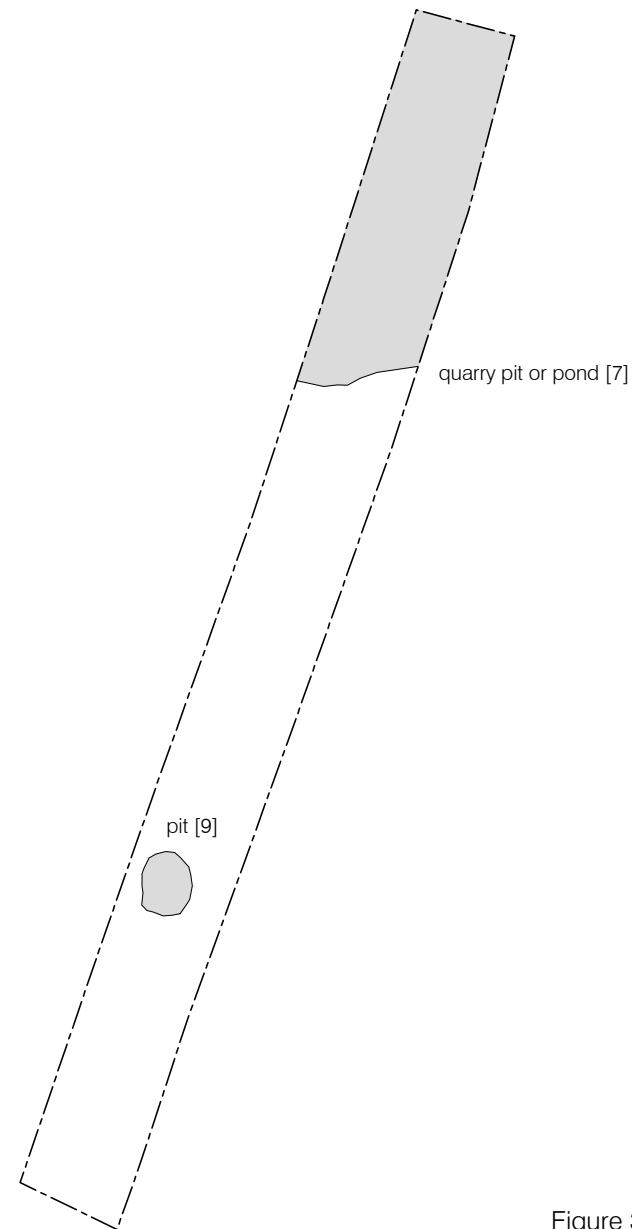
Figure 2
Trench Location
1:500 at A4



Trench 1



Trench 2



11 APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: The site, view north-east towards junction of Bury Road and Blenheim Road



Plate 2: The coach house (to be retained, extended and converted to residential use), view west



Plate 3: Trench 1, view west (no archaeological features)



Plate 4: Trench 2, view north



Plate 5: Pit [9], which extended below the watertable, view south-east



Plate 6: Pit/ Pond [7], view south



Plate 7: Trench 2, view south with Pit/ Pond [7] (extended below watertable)
in foreground

12 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Period	Interpretation	Trench Number
1		Trench	Trench No.	N/A	N/A	1
2		Trench	Trench No.	N/A	N/A	2
3		Layer	Topsoil	Modern	Garden soil	1, 2
4		Layer	Subsoil	Post-Medieval	Plough-soil	1, 2
5		Layer	Natural	Geological	Geology	1, 2
6	7	Fill	Pit	Post-Medieval	Extraction Pit/ Pond	2
7	7	Cut	Pit	Post-Medieval	Extraction Pit/ Pond	2
8	9	Fill	Pit	Medieval	Rubbish Pit	2
9	9	Cut	Pit	Medieval	Rubbish Pit	2

13 APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-172532

Project details

Project name	1 Bury Rd, Ramsey Evaluation
Short description of the project	A two-trench archaeological evaluation was carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on land at No. 1 Bury Road, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 2841 8487) on 19th February 2014. The archaeological work was commissioned by Cindy Cade in response to a planning condition attached to residential development. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the site. The evaluation identified a medieval (12th-14th-century) rubbish pit suggestive of occupation in the vicinity. This was sealed by a buried plough-soil, indicating that the site subsequently reverted to agricultural use. The results of the fieldwork enhance understanding of the medieval development of this part of Ramsey and can be characterised as being of local significance.
Project dates	Start: 19-02-2014 End: 19-02-2014
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	13/00370/REP - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	CBRR14 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	PIT Medieval
Monument type	POND Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"

Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE HUNTINGDONSHIRE RAMSEY Land at No. 1 Bury Road, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire
Postcode	PE26 1NF
Study area	0.23 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 2841 8487 52.4462934154 -0.110395532765 52 26 46 N 000 06 37 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 6.41m Max: 6.99m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	Dan McConnell
Project design originator	Mark Hinman
Project director/manager	Mark Hinman
Project supervisor	Tom Woolhouse
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Cindy Cade

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	CCC County Archaeology Store
Physical Archive ID	CBRR14
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Physical Archive notes	7 sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery
Digital Archive recipient	CCC County Archaeology Store
Digital Archive ID	CBBR14
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic","Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	CCC County Archaeology Store
Paper Archive ID	CBBR14
Paper Contents	"Ceramics","Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Report","Section","Unpublished Text"
Paper Archive notes	2 x site registers, 2 x trench record sheets, 1 x context sheet, 1 x permatrace section sheet, 1 'grey' report

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land at No. 1 Bury Road, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Woolhouse, T.
Other bibliographic	PCAS Report No. R11639

details

Date 2014

Issuer or publisher Pre-Construct Archaeology

Place of issue or
publication Stapleford

Description 25 page bound A4 report with three site/ trench plans, seven colour
photos and three appendices

Entered by Tom Woolhouse (twoolhouse@pre-construct.com)

Entered on 25 February 2014

OASIS:

Please e-mail [English Heritage](#) for OASIS help and advice

© ADS 1996-2012 Created by [Jo Gilham and Jen Mitcham, email](#) Last modified Wednesday 9 May 2012

Cite only: <http://www.oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm> for this page

PCA

PCA SOUTH

UNIT 54
BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE
96 ENDWELL ROAD
BROCKLEY
LONDON SE4 2PD
TEL: 020 7732 3925 / 020 7639 9091
FAX: 020 7639 9588
EMAIL: info@pre-construct.com

PCA NORTH

UNIT 19A
TURSDALE BUSINESS PARK
DURHAM DH6 5PG
TEL: 0191 377 1111
FAX: 0191 377 0101
EMAIL: info.north@pre-construct.com

PCA CENTRAL

7 GRANTA TERRACE
STAPLEFORD
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB22 5DL
TEL: 01223 845 522
FAX: 01223 845 522
EMAIL: info.central@pre-construct.com

PCA WEST

BLOCK 4
CHILCOMB HOUSE
CHILCOMB LANE
WINCHESTER
HAMPSHIRE SO23 8RB
TEL: 01962 849 549
EMAIL: info.west@pre-construct.com

PCA MIDLANDS

17-19 KETTERING RD
LITTLE BOWDEN
MARKET HARBOROUGH
LEICESTERSHIRE LE16 8AN
TEL: 01858 468 333
EMAIL: info.midlands@pre-construct.com

