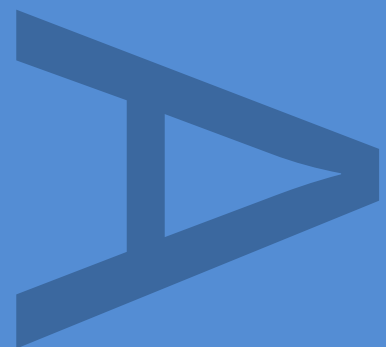


**Land at Wadloes Road,
Cambridge, CB5 8PH: An
Archaeological Trial Trench
Evaluation.**

March 2015



LAND AT WADLOES ROAD,
CAMBRIDGE, CB5 8PH

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH
EVALUATION

Quality Control

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Land at Wadloes Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB5 8PH:

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

Local Planning Authority: Cambridge City Council

Planning Reference: N/A

Central National Grid Reference: TL 4790 5943

Site Code: CWRC15
HER No: ECB 4044

Report No. R12020

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March 2015

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ABSTRACT

This report describes the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on Land at Wadloes Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB5 8PH (NGR TL 4790 5943) on the 4th-5th March 2015. The archaeological work was commissioned by Keepmoat in advance of the proposed development of the area into a residential unit of 10 flats following the demolition of the pre-existing buildings on the site. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the proposed development area.

The evaluation uncovered no evidence of archaeological activity in any the three trenches.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on Land at Wadloes Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB5 8PH (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 4790 5943) on the 4th-5th March 2015 (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by Keepmoat in advance of the proposed development of the area into a residential unit of 10 flats following the demolition of the pre-existing buildings on the site.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Mark Hinman of PCA (Hinman 2013) in response to a Brief for archaeological evaluation issued by Dan McConnell (McConnell 2014) of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET).
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 A total of three trenches totalling 55m were excavated and recorded. Trench 2 was 5m shorter than expected due to access constraints on site.
- 1.6 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 Geology

2.1.1 The underlying geology of the site is chalk of the West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation (British Geological Survey; Website 1). This comprises chalk bedrock formed 94 to 100 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period.

2.1.2 The superficial deposits of the general area are river terrace deposits, consisting of sand and gravel. These formed up to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary period (British Geological Survey; Website 1).

2.1.3 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 site has, since the 1950s, been part of a large housing development; accordingly little other information on the soil types is available.

2.2 Topography

2.2.1 The site comprises an area of approximately 0.18ha. 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 site. The River Cam is located 0.8km north of the site, the site falling on the southern side of the wider river valley.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 General

3.1.1 The site lies in an area of known archaeological significance, as recorded in the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Numerous HER records exist for the area surrounding the current site and an overview is summarised below. The full set of results from the HER search are detailed in the desk-based assessment (Garwood 2013).

3.2 Prehistoric

3.2.1 This area has long been recognised as an area of great potential for prehistoric settlement due to its situation on the free draining chalk soils and river gravel river terrace deposits of the Cam river valley and Coldhams Brook. The wealth of archaeological investigations and finds that have occurred in the area to the site have revealed considerable and significant remains from the prehistoric periods, particularly the Iron Age.

3.2.2 Considerable assemblages of early flint artefacts dating from the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods have been recovered from the river terrace gravels to the west of the site in the area of the alluvial Cam, while, closer to the site, Palaeolithic flint artefacts and animal remains were uncovered c. 300m west of the site at Elfleda House and a Neolithic flint axe, close by at no. 41 Stanesfield Road. The Cam river valley continues to be an attractive area for settlement into the Bronze Age, mainly concentrated to the south and west of the site along the river floodplain and on the higher ground to the north-east of the site.

3.2.3 The most significant prehistoric activity in terms of scale and preservation are the remains of Iron Age occupation activity uncovered at two sites c.500-600m to the east of the site within the present grounds of Marshall Aerospace and just east of the City Cemetery along Newmarket Road. These sites uncovered prehistoric settlement evidence, with associated enclosures and field systems. Bearing in mind the Iron Age settlement evidence previously uncovered to the north, the combination of these discoveries and previous interventions in the area have revealed the

potential for one of the largest Iron Age settlements in the region, covering at least 6ha in area and encompassing the area of the site.

- 3.2.4 Given the intrusive nature of the development and its location on the lower slopes of the Cam valley above the flood plain and proximity to the significant Iron Age settlement activity to the east and north-east, the potential for uncovering archaeological activity from the Prehistoric period is considered as moderate.

3.3 Roman

- 3.3.1 Although Roman occupation of the general area was on a considerable scale with the substantial Roman town of Dvroliponte (later known as Cambridge) only 2.5 km to the west of the site, most of the sites close to the site relate to single chance finds of artefacts. Historic reference is made to Roman burials to the south of the site at Coldhams Common while more recent archaeological investigations, c. 500-600m to the north-east of the site along Newmarket Road uncovered Roman features characteristic of outlying domestic occupation and evidence for nearby industrial activity. In all, the evidence suggests activities associated with an area peripheral to a main area of yet unidentified Roman settlement. Although there is clearly Roman activity in the general area of the site, the scale of this activity and its relationship with pre-existing Iron Age settlement and field systems is unclear. As no evidence of Roman activity is recorded close to the site, it is thought that the site has a low-moderate potential for surviving Roman settlement or associated field systems.

3.4 Saxon

- 3.4.1 The parish of Fen Ditton was first recorded in around 950 as Dittone, meaning "tun or the village by the ditch", the name derived from its position beside the northern section of the Fleam Dyke, a Saxon or possibly earlier dyke that passes east to west through the village and to the north of the site. It has been suggested that the Dyke was excavated to defend a peninsula of relatively high land which runs northwards as far as Horningsea village.
- 3.4.2 Given the sites location to Fen Ditton, the Fleam Dyke and the fertile slopes

of the Cam valley it is not surprising that there are a number of records relating to Saxon activity within the study area. Saxon occupation evidence has been uncovered at a distance to the west of the site near Coldhams Brook and inhumations burials uncovered on Coldhams Common. Closer to the site two Saxon sites are of note. An Anglo-Saxon spearhead was uncovered directly south-east of the site in Peverel Road, while an archaeological excavation along Barnwell Road to the south revealed two mid-late Saxon inhumations, a ditch and a pit, while subsequent monitoring of the same site uncovered further burials. Whilst the extent and character of the Saxon burials, whether they are localised burials or fall within a much larger Christian cemetery, remains unclear, their distance from the site and the general activity in the area suggests there is a low potential for Saxon remains.

3.5 Medieval

- 3.5.1 During the medieval period the general area of the site, from which it now takes its name, Abbey Ward, was under the influence of the Barnwell Priory and the Augustinian monks (or Black Canons). Although the priory site lies outside the study area, Barnwell Priory would have had a considerable influence on the political, social and agricultural landscape at the time.
- 3.5.2 During the medieval period the area of the proposed development was distinctly agricultural in character with arable or pasture land bordered by common land, water meadow and fen. "Sterebriggefild (Stourbridge Common) was the site for the famous Stourbridge Fair, the largest in medieval Europe, which was first held in 1211 following a charter granted by King John. Coldhams Common was an area of common land to the south and west of the site dating from at least the 14th century while, to the east of the site, evidence of medieval farming in the form of ridge and furrow earthworks, covering up to 50 acres of land, have been identified within the present Marshall Aerospace site. Together these give some impression of the character of the landscape during the medieval period.
- 3.5.3 This undeveloped agricultural character is supported by the general lack of medieval finds or events close to the site. Most medieval sites or finds are

focused within or around the village of Fen Ditton, which lies at some distance to the north of the site while though chance finds of medieval date have been found within the study area none are close to the site. Therefore it is thought that there is a low potential for surviving medieval remains within the site.

3.6 Post-Medieval

3.6.1 The documentary and cartographic evidence shows that the area of the site is within in the parish of Fen Ditton, which lies outside the boundary of the city and had remained, since the medieval period, as an area of primarily agricultural land. The vast majority of the post-medieval sites recorded on the CHER have little relevance to the site as they relate to individual buildings or structures that date to the 19th and 20th centuries. The cartographic evidence clearly shows that the site had remained as agricultural land until it was developed during the 1930s, 1940s and the early 1950s as part of the Ditton Fields Housing Estate. Accordingly the potential for finding significant post-medieval remains is considered to be low.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Excavation

- 4.1.1 The WSI for this site stated that three linear trial trenches totalling 60m were to be excavated within the proposed development area and where possible outside the footprint of the former school building.
- 4.1.2 Ground reduction was carried out under archaeological supervision using an 7-ton tracked 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 and hoe as appropriate and all further excavation was undertaken manually using hand tools. Overburden deposits were set aside beside each trench and examined visually and with a metal-detector for finds retrieval.
- 4.1.3 Metal-detecting was carried out during the topsoil and subsoil stripping and throughout the excavation process. Archaeological features and spoilheaps were scanned by metal-detector as they were encountered/ created.
- 4.1.4 Field excavation techniques and recording methods are detailed in the PCA Fieldwork Induction Manual (Operations Manual I) by Joanna Taylor and Gary Brown (2009).
- 4.1.5 All features were investigated and recorded in order to properly understand the date and nature of the archaeological remains on the site and to recover sufficient finds assemblages to assess the chronological development and socio-economic character of the site over time.

4.2 Recording Methodology

- 4.2.1 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.

- 4.2.2 Manual plans and section drawings of archaeological features and deposits were drawn at an appropriate scale (1:10, 1:20 or 1:50).
- 4.2.3 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.
- 4.2.4 High-resolution digital photographs were taken at all stages of the evaluation process. Digital Photographs were taken of all archaeological features and deposits.
- 4.2.5 Artefacts and ecofacts were collected by hand and assigned to the record number of the deposit from which they were retrieved, receiving appropriate care prior to removal from the site (IfA 2001; Walker 1990; Watkinson 1981).

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The trenches are described below in numerical order, with technical data tabulated. Features and deposits are described from west to east or south to north depending on the alignment of the trench. The evaluation revealed no evidence for archaeological activity in any of the trenches.

5.2 Trench 1

5.2.1 Trench 1 contained 20th century drains, presumably for the school that previously occupied the site.

TRENCH 1	Figures 2		Plate 1	
Trench Alignment: E-W	Length: 15m	Level of Natural (m OD): 12.34-12.95m		
Deposit	Context No.	Average Depth (m)		
		E End	W End	
Concrete	+	0.15m	0.1m	
Topsoil	(100)	0.2m	0.15m	
Subsoil	(101)	0.25m	0.3m	
Natural	(102)	0.1m	0.1m	
Summary				
Trench 1 was located close to the northern boundary of the site.				
No evidence of archaeological features was seen. The trench contained a modern drain aligned north-south running along the length of the trench, which appears to have been related to the 20th century school previously on the site.				

5.3 Trench 2

5.3.1 The trench contained a modern drain and cable. No archaeological features were present.

TRENCH 2	Figures 2		Plate 2	
Trench Alignment: N-S	Length: 15m	Level of Natural (m OD):12.68-12.73m		
Deposit	Context No.	Average Depth (m)		
		N End	S End	
Made ground	(103)	-	-	
Topsoil	(100)	0.05m	0.1m	

Natural	(102)	0.1m	0.2m
Summary			
Trench 2 was located in the east of the site.			
There were no archaeological features present. The trench contained a modern drain and cable.			

5.4 Trench 3

5.4.1 The trench contained modern drains and brick manholes, no archaeological activity was present.

TRENCH 3	Figures 2	Plate 3	
Trench Alignment: E-W	Length: 25m	Level of Natural (m OD): 12.16-12.46m	
Deposit	Context No.	Average Depth (m)	
		E End	W End
Concrete Foundation	(105)	0.06m	0.05m
Tarmac	(104)	0.1m	0.1m
Natural Clay	(106)	0.05m	0.1m
Summary			
Trench 3 was located along the southern boundary of the site.			
There were no archaeological features present. Modern drains ran the length of the trench.			

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1.1 The trial trench evaluation has identified no evidence for archaeological activity on land at Wadloes Road, Cambridge.
- 6.1.2 Although Trench 3 showed evidence for the removal of topsoil and subsoil deposits during construction of the school previously on site, both Trench 1 and 2 demonstrated that archaeological deposits were absent from site, rather than having been truncated by 20th century development.
- 6.1.3 The lack of archaeological features in this site is not unexpected given the results of previous archaeological work in this part of Cambridge.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

7.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Keepmoat for commissioning the work and Vincent Fitzgerald for operating the excavator. PCA are also grateful to Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team for monitoring the work. The author would also like to thank Jennifer Simonson of PCA's CAD department for preparing the figures. The project was managed by Taleyna Fletcher.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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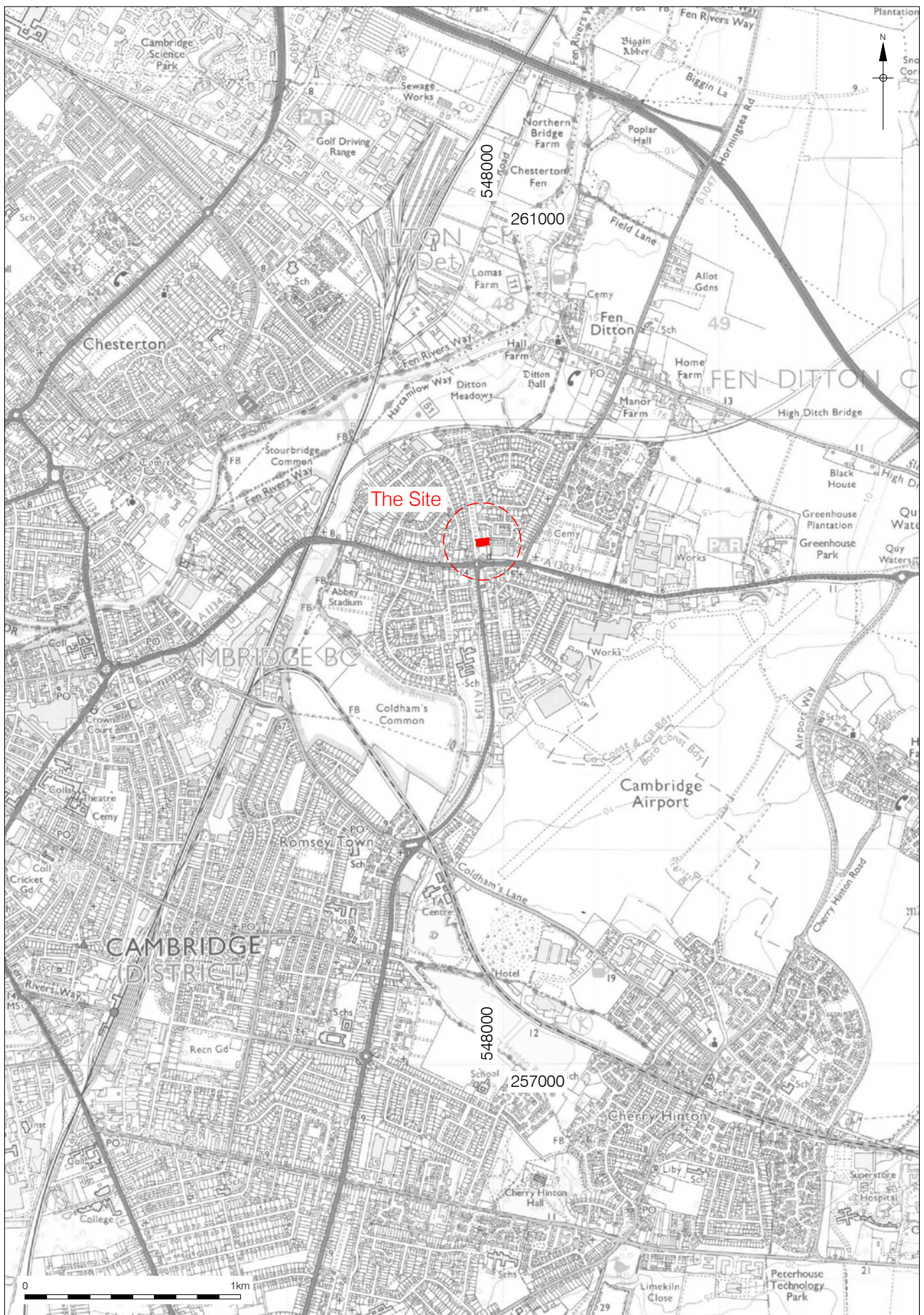
Hinman, M. 2013 Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Wadloes Road, Cambridge, CB5 8PH (unpublished)

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<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.htm>



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 20/05/14 JS

Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:25,000 at A4

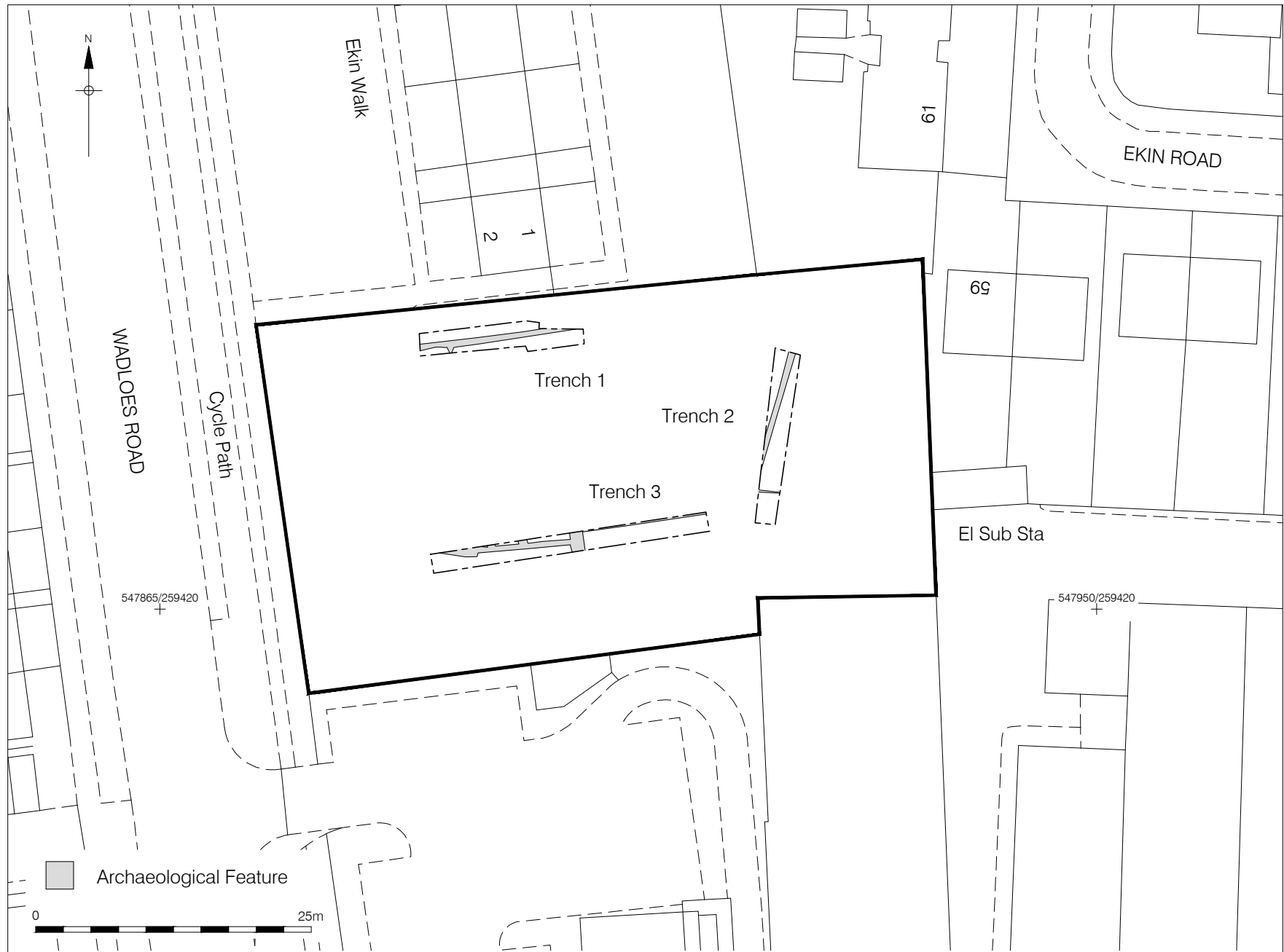


Figure 2
Trench Location
1:500 at A4

9 APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: Trench 1, view east



Plate 2: Trench 2, view south



Plate 3: Trench 3, view east

10 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Cut	Type	Interpretation	Trench Number
100	N/A	Layer	Topsoil	1-2
101	N/A	Layer	Subsoil	1-2
102	N/A	Layer	Natural Gravels	1-2
103	N/A	Layer	Made ground	2
104	N/A	Layer	Tarmac	3
105	N/A	Layer	Concrete Foundation	3
106	N/A	Layer	Natural Clay	3

11 APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-205365

Project details

Project name Land at Wadloes Road, Cambridge, CB5 8PH: Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

Short description of the project This report describes the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on Land at Wadloes Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB5 8PH (NGR TL 4790 5943) on the 4th-5th March 2015. The archaeological work was commissioned by Keepmoat in advance of the proposed development of the area into a residential unit of 10 flats following the demolition of the pre-existing buildings on the site. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the proposed development area. The evaluation uncovered no evidence of archaeological activity in any the three trenches.

Project dates Start: 04-03-2015 End: 05-03-2015

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes CWRC15 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed

Methods & "Sample Trenches" techniques

Development type Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the planning process Not known / Not recorded

Project location

Country England
Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE CAMBRIDGE CAMBRIDGE Wadloes Road
Postcode CB5 8PH
Study area 0.18 Hectares
Site coordinates TL 4789 5943 52.2127841767 0.164859534388 52 12 46 N 000 09
53 E Point

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Name of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
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Type of Construction/housing
sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Physical Archive No
Exists?

Physical Archive Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
recipient

Digital Archive Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
recipient

Digital Archive ID CWRC15

Digital Contents "none"

Digital Media "Images raster / digital photography","Survey"
available

Paper Archive Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
recipient

Paper Archive ID CWRC15

Paper Contents "none"

Paper Media "Context sheet","Report"
available

Project bibliography

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