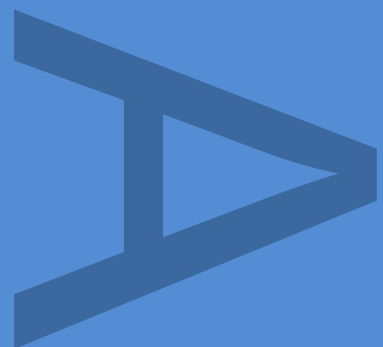


**Land at Brampton Hut, Great  
North Road, Cambridgeshire:  
Post Excavation Assessment**

**July 2016**



**PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY  
ECB4544  
REPORT NUMBER: R12564**

# LAND AT BRAMPTON HUT, GREAT NORTH ROAD, CAMBRIDGSHIRE

## POST EXCAVATION ASSESSMENT

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## **Land at Brampton Hut, Great North Road, Cambridgeshire: Post-Excavation Assessment**

**Local Planning Authority:** Huntingdonshire District Council

**Central National Grid Reference:** TL 1930 7192

**Site Code:** ECB4544

**Planning Reference:** 1100801OUT

**Report No.** R12564

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**July 2016**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This report describes the results of archaeological excavation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on land at Brampton Hut, Great North Road, Cambridgeshire (centred on NGR TL 1930 7192) between 30th March and 6th April 2016. The archaeological work was commissioned by Winvic Construction, in response to a planning condition attached to the construction of a new retail area and landscaping. The aim of the work was to preserve by record any archaeological remains which would be damaged or destroyed by the new development.*

*The excavation identified two main phases of field system, defined by boundary ditches, and two rectilinear enclosures. The earliest activity comprised two ditches on a northwest-southeast alignment. Finds were scarce owing to the agricultural character of the ditches, but the alignment of the ditches was the same as possible Iron Age field systems and enclosures seen in the field to the south-east of the site, indicating that these boundaries may also be part of a later prehistoric landscape. In the 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries a new field system, possibly part of a dispersed farmstead, on a different alignment was established. Two rectilinear enclosures and two boundary ditches, all on a broadly north-south or east-west alignment, were constructed in the northern half of the site. The low finds assemblage indicates that these features were not immediately close to any areas of settlement, which may have been situated to the north of the excavation area.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 An archaeological excavation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land at Brampton Hut, Great North Road, Cambridgeshire (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 1930 7192) between 30th March and 6th April 2016 (Figure 1; Plates 1-2).
- 1.2 The site lies c.7km to the west of Huntingdon and c.1km to the north-west of Brampton. It is located to the south-west of a circular interchange connecting the north-south A1 road and the east-west A14 road. The site is located adjacent to the existing roadside services and comprises a plot of open grassland. It has an overall area of approximately 0.2ha.
- 1.3 The archaeological work was commissioned by Winvic Construction, in response to an archaeological planning condition attached to the construction of a new retail area and landscaping (Planning Reference 1100801OUT).
- 1.4 A trial trench evaluation of the site, carried out by Archaeological Solutions Limited in February 2012, revealed a concentration of archaeological remains within the south-east portion of the site (Barlow 2012). Undated pits, gullies and ditches were found, thought to be possibly prehistoric in origin.
- 1.5 The excavation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Mary-Anne Slater of PCA (Slater 2015) in response to a Brief for Archaeological Investigation (dated 17th August 2015) from Gemma Stewart of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCCHET). This advice states that, in accordance with paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework, any planning permission granted for development of the site should be subject to the following archaeological conditions:
  1. No fieldwork may commence until written approval of a specification has been issued by the Historic Environment Team.
  2. The scheme of investigation shall include an assessment of significance

and research questions; and

- a. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
- b. The programme for post-investigation assessment
- c. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
- d. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- e. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- f. Nomination of a competent person or persons/ organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation
- g. The site investigation shall be completed prior to development, or in such other phased arrangement, as agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

1.6 The main aims of the excavation were to 'preserve by record' any archaeological remains present in those areas of the site which would be affected by groundworks associated with the new development, to assess the significance of those remains in a local, regional or national research context, as appropriate, to realise the site's research potential through a programme of post-excavation analysis and research, and to disseminate the results of the project through publication.

1.7 This Post-Excavation Assessment (PXA) describes the results of the excavation and their significance and provides a proposal for dissemination of the project results through publication in the Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society. Following completion of the project, the site archive will be deposited at Cambridge County Council Archaeology Stores.



## **2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

- 2.1 The geology of the site is Oxford Clay - Mudstone (British Geological Survey 2016). The drift deposits are River Terrace Deposits - formed from rivers depositing mainly sand and gravel detrital material in channels to form river terrace deposits, with fine silt and clay from overbank floods forming floodplain alluvium.
- 2.2 The River Terrace Deposits sand and gravel (102) was present in the excavation area at depths between c. 0.45m and 0.70m below present ground level, generally becoming more deeply buried to the south. The natural geology was overlain by subsoil (101), a mid orange brown clay silt with moderate flint and chalk, which in turn was overlain by topsoil (100), a dark grey brown sandy clay silt with occasional flint and chalk.
- 2.3 The site is on relatively level ground at c.12m above Ordnance Datum (AOD). It is located close to the floor of the Ouse Valley on the western slope, which descends from c.45m AOD to the north-west to c.10m AOD to the south-west. The Alconbury Brook runs northeast-southwest c.500m north of the site.
- 2.4 The site has an overall area of approximately 0.2ha. At the time of the excavation, the site was open grassland enclosed by a ditch. Land immediately to the south and west is occupied by Brampton Hut services, comprising a garage, retail units and a hotel. Land to the north and east of the site, beyond the A1 and A14, remains undeveloped in character, comprising mainly of arable farmland.

### **3      ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 3.1      The site lies in an area of known archaeological significance, as recorded in the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER). The area around Brampton has produced evidence for settlement and land use from the Neolithic period onwards. Settlement and features of Iron Age date are known to the north and east of the site, while a series of cropmarks indicative of an enclosure, stockades and a pit alignment are known to the south, probably also of Iron Age or Roman date. Numerous medieval ridge and furrow cropmarks are also known in the area.
- 3.2      Excavations between 1990 and 1991 at Birds Land Farm, north of Brampton, identified a Neolithic cursus and mortuary enclosure (HER 02117C), while excavations at Huntingdon Racecourse in the mid-1990s revealed extensive evidence of tree clearance, probably of Neolithic date (HER 11135). A series of parallel Neolithic ditches and an Iron Age enclosed settlement containing a roundhouse were identified during excavations at Thrapston Road, Brampton (HER 10704 and 10704A), 0.8km to the south-east of the site. Associated contemporary ditched field systems were also located, but no evidence was found for Roman continuity of the site.
- 3.3      Despite the proximity of Brampton Hut to the Roman town of Durovigutum at Godmanchester, c.4.4km to the south-east, there is little evidence for Roman activity within 1km of the site. There is only one HER result, for Romano-British remains at Weybridge Farm, Alconbury (HER 00822), which included a small pit containing two pottery vessels and cremated human bone.
- 3.4      An aerial photographic assessment (ECB652) of the area revealed ridge and furrow cropmarks located c.500m to the south-east (HER 02059). Ridge and furrow cropmark (HER 11652) is evident on the western section of the site and also within the site.
- 3.5      The site was subject to a trial trench evaluation, carried out by Archaeological Solutions Limited in February 2012 (Barlow 2012). A total of four linear trial trenches (totalling 120m) were excavated, revealing pits, ditches, gullies and a furrow, mainly concentrated in the eastern half of the

site. All of the features were undated and none contained any finds except one feature which contained an unidentifiable fragment of animal bone. The ditches and gullies in Trench 3 were on the same alignment as the ridge and furrow, possibly suggesting that there may have been some association.

- 3.6 Overall, the evaluation indicated the likely presence on the site of numerous undated features relating to several phases of activity. The site thus had potential to contribute to knowledge of landscape organisation and agriculture in this part Cambridgeshire. However, the lack of pottery or other dateable finds in the identified features was a problem.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 General (Figures 2 and 3)**

4.1.1 The excavation (c. 0.2ha) occupied the south-eastern corner of the site. It was roughly rectangular in plan. It encompassed the area around Trenches 3 and 4, the main area of probable prehistoric activity. In practice, the excavation area had to be moved to the north in order to allow turning space for plant, and to the west to avoid the fence line and trees at the eastern limit of excavation.

### **4.2 Excavation Methodology**

4.2.1 Ground reduction during the excavation was carried out under archaeological supervision using a 21-ton 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 2m-wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil deposits were removed in spits down to the level of the undisturbed natural geological deposits where potential archaeological features could be observed and recorded. No features or deposits of archaeological interest survived above the level of the natural geology.

4.2.2 Exposed surfaces were cleaned by trowel and sand-hoe as appropriate and all further excavation was undertaken manually using hand tools.

### **4.3 Recording and Finds Recovery**

4.3.1 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.

4.3.2 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 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]. Where more than one slot was excavated through an individual feature, each

intervention was assigned additional numbers for the cutting event and for the deposits it contained (these deposits within cut features being referred to here as 'fills'). Multiple sections excavated across a single feature were later grouped together by unique 'group numbers', signified here by capitals: e.g. DITCH 1. The record numbers assigned to cuts, deposits and groups are entirely arbitrary and in no way reflect the chronological order in which events took place. All features and deposits excavated during the excavation are listed in Appendix 2. Artefacts recovered during excavation were assigned to the record number of the deposit from which they were retrieved.

4.3.3 Metal-detecting was carried out during the topsoil stripping and throughout the excavation process. Archaeological features and spoil heaps were scanned by metal-detector periodically. Only objects of modern date were found and were not retained for accession.

4.3.4 High-resolution digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits, and were used to keep a record of the excavation process. In addition, monochrome photographs were taken of significant features.

#### **4.4 Sampling Strategy**

4.4.1 As machining progressed, it quickly became apparent that the principal potential of the site was for evidence of prehistoric field systems. Recent experience of excavating these sorts of agricultural boundaries at other sites suggested that finds would be extremely scarce and that sampling would be necessary to maximise the chances of recovering dating evidence. As such, regularly-spaced slots were excavated and recorded. Investigations of ditches concentrated on areas away from junctions or intersections in order to recover uncontaminated dating evidence. Where the stratigraphic relationship between features could not be discerned in plan, relationship slots were also excavated and these were recorded as part of the GPS survey and noted on the relevant record sheets. Excavation also focused on ditch terminals as these are known to have often been focal points for deliberate deposits of artefacts, particularly on prehistoric sites.

## **4.5 Environmental Sampling**

- 4.5.1 A total of six bulk samples (normally 40 litres in volume unless insufficient material was available due to the size of the feature) were taken to extract and identify micro- and macro-botanical remains. The aim of this sampling was to investigate the past environment and economy of the site, and particularly to identify any evidence relating to the nature of the agricultural regime(s) in which the field system(s) operated. An additional aim of the sampling was to recover small objects that are not readily recovered by hand-collection. These samples were taken from sealed deposits. In order to assess any spatial or functional patterning in the deposition/ presence of plant remains, a range of different feature types (ditches, pits and natural features), distributed across the excavation area, were sampled.

## 5 QUANTIFICATION OF ARCHIVE

### 5.1 Paper Archive

Type	Evaluation	Excavation	Total
Context register sheets	2	2	4
Context sheets	31	40	71
Plan registers	0	0	0
Plans at 1:50	0	0	0
Plans at 1:20	0	0	0
Plans at 1:10	0	0	0
Plans at 1:5	0	0	0
Section register sheets	1	1	2
Sections at 1:10 & 1:20	Not known	16	16
Trench record sheets	Not known	0	0
Photo register sheets	Not known	3	3
Small finds register sheets	0	0	0
Environmental register sheets	Not known	1	1

### 5.2 Digital Archive

Type	Evaluation	Excavation	Total
Digital photos	18	121	139
GPS survey files	Not known	1	1
Digital plans	Not known	1	1
GIS project	Not known	0	0
Access database	Not known	1	1

### 5.3 Physical Archive

Type	Evaluation	Excavation	Total
Struck flint	0	3	3
Burnt flint	0	0	0
Pottery (sherds/g)	0	32/94	32/94
Ceramic building material (CBM)	0	0	0
Glass	0	0	0
Worked stone	0	0	0
Small Finds	0	0	0
Slag	0	0	0
Animal bone	1	167	168
Shell	0	0	0

Environmental bulk samples	Not known	6	6
Environmental bulk samples (10 litre buckets)	Not known	18	18
Monolith samples	0	0	0
Other samples (specify)	0	0	0
Black and white films	2	1	3
Colour slides	2	0	2



## **6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE**

### **6.1 Overview (Figures 2, 3 and 4)**

- 6.1.1 The excavation revealed enclosure and field boundary ditches which can be assigned on grounds of stratigraphy, spatial associations and, to some extent, finds evidence, to two main chronological periods. The earliest of these is undated, but likely to belong to the prehistoric period. In the medieval period, a new set of boundaries and enclosures on different alignments entirely superseded the field system. The character of the site in both periods remained agricultural, with little evidence for more intensive occupation-related activity, although there are indications that the medieval boundaries and enclosures may have been on the periphery of a dispersed early medieval farmstead.
- 6.1.2 The location of the trenches as provided in the evaluation report, combined with the excavation plan are presented in Figure 2. There was a discrepancy in the location of the trenches when compared to where they were recorded in the excavation area and have therefore been re-plotted in Figure 3. This figure, showing the “adjusted” location of the trenches shows the features recorded in this earlier investigation corresponding with those investigated in the excavation.

### **6.2 Prehistoric (?) Boundary (DITCHES 1 and 2) (Figure 4; Plates 3-5)**

- 6.2.1 The excavation area contained two north-west to south-east aligned boundary ditches. These are on the same alignment as potential Iron Age enclosure ditches and linear features seen in cropmarks in the field to the south-east of the site (CHER 08360, TL 197 714). Excavations to the south-east of the site (in the area now occupied by Laws Crescent) revealed an Iron Age rectangular enclosure and a roundhouse (CHER 02117A and 10704). DITCHES 1 and 2 may form part of a larger later prehistoric landscape.
- 6.2.2 Finds were extremely sparse but DITCH 2 contained one struck flint, broadly dated to the prehistoric period. The size of the assemblage and lack of diagnostic features means that no precise typological identification can be

made. However, the excavation yielded two additional pieces of struck flint which were characteristic of Mesolithic to Early Neolithic flint-working (see Bishop, Section 6.1). Although small, this group indicates that there was some Mesolithic to Early Neolithic activity in the vicinity of the excavation area, which is also known from excavations at Birds Land Farm, Huntingdon Racecourse and Thrapston Road (CHER 02117C, 11135, 10704 and 10704A).

6.2.3 Both ditches exhibited a simple sequence of infilling through natural processes, with the very limited quantities of cultural material likely reflecting the distance of the enclosures from contemporary settlement areas. The ditches were mainly wide and deep in the north-west; those further to the south-east were generally shallower.

6.2.4 The excavation was only a small window on part of this agricultural landscape and it is clear from the plan of the ditch system that it continues, at least to the north-west (Figure 4).

DITCH 1 (Slots [114] and [133])

6.2.5 DITCH 1 (Figure 5, Sections 7 and 15) was located in the north-west corner of the excavation area. It extended from north-west to south-east for 8.2m and continued beyond the western limit of excavation. It was widest and deepest to the north-west, measuring c.1.14m wide x 0.49m deep, but narrowed to c.0.86m wide x 0.41m deep as it continued south-eastwards. It had steep, straight sides, with a 'v'-shaped profile. Even in its deeper sections, the ditch had only a single homogenous fill, representing natural silting-up over time. No finds were present. It was truncated by DITCH 6.

DITCH 2 (Slots [123], [128], [137] and [139])

6.2.6 DITCH 2 (Figure 4, Sections 10, 13 and 16) was located in the eastern half of the excavation area. It extended from north-west to south-east for 23m and curved east before terminating. It varied in size, measuring between 0.7-1.4m wide x 0.26-0.4m deep, with moderate-steeply sloping concave sides and a 'u'-shaped profile. It had a single fill deriving from natural silting-up. 62 fragments (130.5g) of cattle and cattle-sized bone were present in Slot [123],

16 fragments (131.5g) of cattle and cattle-sized bone were present in Slot [137] and a prehistoric flint flake was present in Slot [139]. It was truncated by DITCH 8.

### **6.3 Medieval (?) Enclosure 1 (DITCHES 3-5) (Figure 4; Plates 6-7)**

6.3.1 In the north-western part of the excavation area was a small rectilinear enclosure. Stratigraphy indicates that this enclosure predates the medieval field boundaries, or at least their initial establishment, as DITCH 6 cut DITCHES 3 and 5, and is thought to have been the eastern boundary of the enclosure.

6.3.2 The north-south and east-west alignment of the enclosure mirrors that of the medieval boundary ditches and enclosure to the east, suggesting that the later ditches were laid out with reference to ENCLOSURE 1, at a time when the enclosure was still visible on the ground. On balance, taking into account the combined evidence of stratigraphy and spatial associations, a tentative medieval date is suggested.

#### **ENCLOSURE 1 (DITCHES 3-5)**

6.3.3 ENCLOSURE 1 was located in the north-west corner of the excavation area. It was sub-square/rectilinear in plan, measuring 2m x 2.5m internally. It had a 0.7m-wide entrance to the south-west, located between the terminals of DITCHES 3 and 4. The interior of the enclosure was empty. It was truncated by DITCH 6 to the east.

#### **DITCH 3 (Slots [110] and [141])**

6.3.4 DITCH 3 (Figure 5, Sections 4 and 6) was aligned east-west, extending for 2.3m and forming the northern boundary of ENCLOSURE 1, before turning 90° and extending south for 2.3m. It was narrower and shallower where it delineated the western side of the enclosure, measuring c.0.65m wide x 0.05m deep, with a shallow profile. The east-west aligned part of the ditch was larger, measuring c.0.78m wide x 0.11m deep, with a shallow profile. No finds were present.

#### **DITCH 4 (Slot [112])**

6.3.5 DITCH 4 (Figure 5, Section 5) was aligned northeast-southwest, extending

for 1.2m and forming the southern boundary of ENCLOSURE 1. It was narrower than DITCH 3, measuring c.0.43m wide x 0.12m deep, with a moderate profile. No finds were present. It appeared to be an earlier phase of the enclosure, with DITCH 5 being a later re-cut.

#### DITCH 5 (Slot [116])

- 6.3.6 DITCH 5 (Figure 5, Section 8) was aligned northeast-southwest, extending for 1.2m and forming the southern boundary of ENCLOSURE 1. It measured c.0.93m wide x 0.12m deep, with a moderate profile. No finds were present. It appeared to be a later phase of the enclosure, possibly a later re-cut of DITCH 4.

### **6.4 Medieval Boundary Ditches (DITCHES 6 and 7) (Figure 4; Plates 6-8)**

- 6.4.1 Two boundary ditches (DITCHES 6 and 7) extended on a broadly north-northwest to south-southeast alignment across the site, the western DITCH 6 truncated ENCLOSURE 1 and DITCH 1 (Figure 4). DITCH 6 truncated south of DITCH 1. Less than 1m to the east, DITCH 7 ran parallel to the western ditch, extending south-southeast from the northern limit of excavation for 36m before continuing out of the southern limit of excavation.
- 6.4.2 A small assemblage of pottery (29 sherds; 38g) from DITCH 7 indicates a medieval date. Although the sherds were small, the pottery from [135] appears to have been from a jar, with an everted, thickened rim. It has affinities with the medieval Shelly Ware tradition in the region (see Sudds, Section 7.3). The southern portion of the ditch was devoid of any finds and as this section was close to the northern limit of excavation, it suggests that the focus of occupation or other activity could lie to the north, outside the excavation area.
- 6.4.3 Residual finds of a Mesolithic to Early Neolithic flint and a sherd of Roman pottery were found from DITCH 6.
- 6.4.4 In all the slots excavated through DITCHES 6 and 7, the fills were the result of gradual silting-up, but they were generally darker in colour than those of the undated boundaries and enclosure. Although conjectural, this could indicate that the land crossed by the ditch was in cultivation by this time and

that, consequently, more decayed organic matter from crops or manuring made its way into the ditch fill.

- 6.4.5 The function of this boundary is uncertain but it is possible that it was part of a wider field system. This system of land division made no reference to the possibly prehistoric landscape that preceded it. The pottery found in DITCH 7 indicates that the boundary was in place by the medieval period.

DITCH 6 (Slots [118] and [127])

- 6.4.6 DITCH 6 (Figure 5, Sections 9 and 12) was located in the north-west of the excavation area. It extended from north to south for 14.8m. It had moderately-sloping concave sides, with a 'u'-shaped profile, and measured c.0.94m wide x 0.16m deep in Slot [127] and c.0.86m wide x 0.25m deep in Slot [118]. It had a single fill deriving from natural silting-up. A Mesolithic to Early Neolithic blade-like flint flake, one sherd (26g) of mid-1<sup>st</sup> to mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century AD pottery and 82 fragments (34.5g) of cattle-sized bone were present in Slot [118]. It truncated ENCLOSURE 1 and DITCH 1 to the west.

DITCH 7 (Slots [120], [124], [130] and [135])

- 6.4.7 DITCH 7 (Figure 5, Sections 9, 11 and 14) was located in the western half of the excavation area. It extended from north to south for 36.5m and continued beyond the northern and southern limits of excavation. It was widest to the south, measuring c.0.92m wide x 0.24m deep, but narrowed to 0.68m wide x 0.24m deep as it continued northwards. It had moderately-sloping concave sides, with a 'u'-shaped profile. It had a single fill deriving from natural silting-up. Five sherds (3g) of mid-12<sup>th</sup> to mid-14<sup>th</sup> century AD shelly ware pottery were present in Slot [120] and 24 sherds (35g) of mid-12<sup>th</sup> to mid-14<sup>th</sup> century AD shelly ware pottery were present in Slot [135]. It was truncated by ENCLOSURE 2 to the east.

## **6.5 Medieval Enclosure 2 (DITCH 8) (Figure 4; Plate 9)**

- 6.5.1 With the exception of modern test pitting associated with the current redevelopment of the site, the most recent feature identified during the excavation was a medieval rectilinear enclosure which extended north out of the excavation area.

- 6.5.2 One sherd (4g) of 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century St. Neots-type pottery and a residual Mesolithic to Early Neolithic flint blade were found in DITCH 8. Although the pottery was abraded and likely to have been redeposited, it (and the other similarly dated pottery from the site) indicates a medieval date for the enclosure.

#### ENCLOSURE 2 (DITCH 8)

- 6.5.3 ENCLOSURE 2 was located in the north of the excavation area. It was rectilinear in plan, measuring 10.4m x 15m internally and extended beyond the northern limit of excavation. The interior of the enclosure was empty.

#### DITCH 8 (Slots [104], [106] and [108])

- 6.5.4 DITCH 8 (Figure 5, Sections 1-3) was aligned north-south, extending for 11m, before turning 90° and extending east for 17m and finally turning another 90° and extending north for 10m. The western side was largest, measuring c.1.5m wide x 0.52m deep, with a steep profile. The east-west aligned southern end of the enclosure was generally smaller, measuring c.0.75m wide x 0.37m deep, with a steep profile. The eastern side was similar in size to the western side, measuring c.1.08m wide x 0.5m deep, with a steep profile. A Mesolithic to Early Neolithic prismatic flint blade was found in Slot [108] and one sherd (4g) of 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century AD St. Neots-type pottery was found in Slot [104]. It truncated DITCHES 2 and 7.

## **7 THE FINDS**

### **7.1 Lithic Assessment**

**Barry Bishop**

#### Introduction

- 7.1.1 The archaeological investigations at the above site resulted in the recovery of three struck flint flakes from ditch fills that are undated or have been dated to the medieval period. Each piece has been catalogued by context and this includes full descriptions and suggests dates of manufacture (see catalogue / Appendix 3). This report discusses the material and assesses its archaeological significance. All metrical descriptions follow the methodology established by Saville (1980).

#### Description

- 7.1.2 The three struck pieces were all made from a fine grained 'glassy' flint that ranges from dark grey to dark brown in colour and is of good knapping quality. Cortex is present on two of the pieces and this is worn but still rough, indicating that the raw materials were gathered from either the local glacial tills or as redeposited clasts within the alluvial gravel terraces that underlie the site. The three pieces are in either a good (sharp) or only slightly chipped condition, and although quite possibly redeposited, were probably recovered from close to where they were originally discarded.
- 7.1.3 The assemblages comprise a decortication flake, a prismatic blade with possible inverse notch and an edge-retouched blade-like flake. The decortication flake is undiagnostic and can only be broadly placed within the prehistoric period, although it is worth noting that it is narrow and had been well struck. The blade and the blade-like flake are products of a systematic reduction technology and can be dated to the Mesolithic or Early Neolithic periods. The edge retouched blade-like flake is a typical tool of that period with the retouch either strengthening the edge or acting as blunting; either way it was probably used as a cutting implement. Notched blades are also typical tool types of these periods but this example is somewhat unusual in that the notching is inverse (ie executed from the dorsal face) and its

freshness suggests the possibility that the modification was caused post-deposition.

#### Significance

- 7.1.4 The struck flint assemblage demonstrates that the site was visited during the Mesolithic or Early Neolithic periods, although the small number of pieces recovered means little can be said concerning the precise chronology or nature of the activity conducted there. The flintwork most probably represents a temporary campsite or stopping point within a much wider landscape of movement and inhabitation. The general area, within the valley floor around the confluence of the Alconbury Brook and Great Ouse, has produced a wealth of contemporary settlement and ceremonial evidence.

#### Recommendations

- 7.1.5 Due to the small size of the assemblage, this report is all that is required for the purposes of archive and no further analytical work is proposed. The assemblage's main significance is that it demonstrates prehistoric activity at the site that is otherwise unrepresented in the structural record. It is therefore recommended that a short description, which can be based on this report, should be included in any published account of the fieldwork conducted at this site.

## 7.2 The Roman Pottery

### Eniko Hudak

- 7.2.1 A single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered during the excavation at Brampton Hut, from the fill of a boundary ditch (117). It is a thick, but rather abraded body sherd in a greyware fabric, which is possibly from a local/nearby source. It compares well to sherds in GREY fabric found at Godmanchester (ECB4601), which were suggested a possible date of AD50-250.

Context	Fabric	Quantity	Date
117	GREY	1 sherd (26g)	AD 50-250

Table 1 The Roman pottery by context



## **7.3 The Pottery**

### **Berni Sudds**

7.3.1 A total of 31 sherds, weighing 68g, were recovered during the investigations, including material of Roman, Late Saxon and probable medieval date. The pottery is very fragmentary and in poor condition. Most, if not all, is likely to re-deposited providing little more than evidence for contemporary activity in the vicinity.

7.3.2 Late Saxon St Neots ware is a common find in the region dating from the 10th to 12th century. The shelly wares are very fragmentary and vesiculated but probably form part of the medieval Shelly ware tradition (SHW) that is also well-paralleled in the region, probably deriving from Northamptonshire or possibly the Peterborough area. No further work is recommended for the Late Saxon and medieval pottery but a period specialist could identify a source for the Roman greyware.

Context	Description	Quantity	Date
103	St Neots-type ware body sherd (laminated)	1 (4g)	900 - 1150
117	Roman greyware body sherd (abraded)	1 (26g)	50 – 400
119	Shelly ware?	5 small sherds + crumbs (3g)	1150 – 1350?
134	Shelly ware jar. Everted, thickened rim and body sherds from the same vessel. Vesiculated shell, corky appearance. Oxidised surfaces.	24 small sherds + crumbs (35g)	1150 – 1350?

Table 2 The pottery by context.

## **7.4 Faunal Remains**

### **Stephanie Emra**

#### **Introduction**

7.4.1 The assemblage results from an archaeological excavation carried out by PCA on the land at Brampton Hut, Great North Road, Cambridgeshire. The site had a NISP (number of identified specimens) of 167 bone fragments with a total weight of 320.5g. 70 fragments were identified down to an animal size category of which 3 were identified down to a species level. All remains

were poorly preserved, being heavily fragmented and heavily weathered.

#### Assemblage Chronology

7.4.2 Due to the agricultural nature of the site little in terms of dateable material was recovered. However, study of the spatial and stratigraphic relationships as well as small quantities of pottery suggests a medieval date, with some prehistoric activity in the area. The faunal assemblage comes from three different contexts which are (118) [117], [137] (136) and (122) [123].

7.4.3 (118) [117] is an undated boundary ditch, although it did contain a single sherd of Roman greyware dating to 50-400 AD. (122) [123] and [137] (136) are part of the same undated boundary ditch.

#### Methodology

7.4.4 The assemblage was recovered from hand collection. The assemblage was identified with reference to a modern reference collection as well as reference to Hillson (1999), Schmid (1972) and France (2008). All anatomical elements were identified to species where possible, any unidentifiable fragments were assigned to general size or taxonomic categories (e.g. Cattle sized, bird etc.). Where appropriate the following information was recorded for each fragment; element, anatomical zone, tooth eruption/wear (after Grant 1982, Payne 1973, Levine 1982, Greenfield & Arnold, 2008, Hillson 2008), butchery marks, metrical data (after von den Driesch 1976), gnawing, burning, surface weathering and pathology.

7.4.5 Caprines (sheep/goat) were differentiated based on the criteria of Boessneck (1969), Halstead et al. (2002), Payne (1985), Prummel and Frisch (1986) and Zeder and Lapham (2010). The sexing of pelvises followed Greenfield (2006).

#### Assemblage Composition

7.4.6 The faunal remains from (122) [123], an undated boundary ditch, totalled 130.5g and are summarised in Table 3.

Species:	Species:	Element:	NISP:
Cattle	Bos taurus	Radius	1
Cattle sized		Unidentified	11
Unidentified		Unidentified	50
Total:			62

Table 3 The zooarchaeological remains from boundary ditch (122) [123].

7.4.7 The faunal remains from the undated boundary ditch (136) [137] totalled 131.5g and are summarised in Table 4.

Species:	Species:	Element:	NISP:
Cattle	Bos taurus	Metacarpal	1
Cattle	Bos taurus	Metapodial	1
Cattle sized		Long bone fragment	1
Cattle sized		Unidentified	2
Unidentified		Unidentified	11
Total:			16

Table 4 The zooarchaeological remains from boundary ditch (136) [137].

7.4.8 The faunal remains from the undated boundary ditch (117) [118] totalled 34.5g and are summarised in Table 5.

Species:	Species:	Element:	NISP:
Cattle sized		Long bone fragment	5
Cattle sized		Unidentified	30
Unidentified		Unidentified	47
Total:			82

Table 5 The zooarchaeological remains from boundary ditch (117) [118].

#### Discussion and Summary

7.4.9 Due to the small and highly fragmented nature of the assemblage few conclusions can be drawn. The high level of fragmentation of the assemblage may be due to the geology, being Oxford clay which tends to be acidic. The assemblage is also highly sun-bleached, so it is likely that the remains are not found in a primary context.

## **7.5 Environmental Assessment**

**Kate Turner**

### Introduction

- 7.5.1 This report summarises the findings of the rapid assessment of six flint samples, taken from a series of possibly medieval ditches at a site north-west of Brampton, Cambridgeshire. The aim of this assessment is to determine the environmental potential of these samples and to establish whether any further work needs to be undertaken.

### Methodology

- 7.5.2 The samples were scanned under a low-power binocular microscope to quantify any environmental material, including seeds, chaff, charred grains, molluscs and charcoal. These were recorded using a non-linear scale to denote abundance where '1' indicates the occasional occurrence of an ecofact (1-10 items), '2' fairly frequent occurrence (11-30 items), '3' more frequent (31-100 items) and '4' abundant (>100 items). A note was also made of any other inclusions, for example roots and plant material. The results of this assessment are shown in Appendix 4.

### Results and Discussion

- 7.5.3 These samples are generally very poor in environmental remains. A single *Rumex* sp (dock/sorrel) seed was found in sample <6>, along with the remains of seed coats attributed to a sub-species of the genus *Nuphar* (water-lily), low concentrations of which were similarly found in sample <2>. Small fragments of charcoal were discovered in samples <1> and <6>, though none are of sufficient size to warrant further analysis. A single insect specimen was also identified in sample <4>, though the level of preservation suggests that this may be a modern intrusion.
- 7.5.4 All six samples contained preserved wood and plant material in varying concentrations (Appendix 4), survival of which is more likely if the deposit is waterlogged or becomes mineralized. Of these the wood fragments could be particularly useful in regards to the assigning an age to the deposits, should the material prove to be in situ, as wood is a widely used material in AMS

dating. Root material was however also present in all of the residues, suggesting the potential for significant bioturbation, and as such the possibility that environmental remains have been redistributed should be considered.

- 7.5.5 Aside from the aforementioned environmental evidence, small fragments of coal were also found in low frequencies in samples <4> and <6>.

#### Recommendations

- 7.5.6 Analysis of these samples has suggested that their environmental potential is very low, and therefore further work is not recommended at this stage.

## **8 DISCUSSION**

### **8.1 Discussion**

- 8.1.1 The principal interest of the excavation is the recording of part of a dispersed medieval farmstead, located to the north-west of the medieval village of Brampton. Although the re-deposited finds are of limited value as chronological indicators, they indicate that the farmstead was in use in the medieval period.
- 8.1.2 The potential later prehistoric boundary ditches are of interest as a contextual backdrop to previously identified Iron Age settlement activity in the vicinity and will help to characterise the nature of land-use around Brampton at this time.
- 8.1.3 These results are of local to regional significance.
- 8.1.4 The excavation results are different to what was anticipated based on the evaluation of this part of the site. The evaluation identified pits, ditches, gullies and a furrow, mainly concentrated in the eastern half of the site. All of the features were undated, but were thought to have potentially prehistoric.
- 8.1.5 One notable discrepancy which is apparent between the two stages of fieldwork is an undated shallow gully (1005, fill 1006) identified in Trench 3 in the northern area of the site (Barlow 2012) which was not found in the excavation. Based on its approximate position, this feature would lie along the western end of the excavation area, but it was not present south of the position of Trench 3. Its shallowness may indicate that it had truncated away.

## **9        UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN**

### **9.1       Additional Specialist Research**

- 9.1.1 No other additional analysis has been identified by the finds and environmental specialists.

### **9.2       Additional Research and Reporting**

- 9.2.1 Disseminate the results of the project by a note in the Cambridgeshire annual fieldwork roundup in PCAS (see 9.4 below).
- 9.2.2 Prepare the site archive for long-term storage and deposit it at Cambridge County Council Archaeology Stores in order to facilitate future research.

### **9.3       Updated Research Questions**

- 9.3.1 Based on the findings of the excavation there are no further research questions.

### **9.4       Timetable**

- 9.4.1 A note for the annual fieldwork roundup in Cambridgeshire will be included in the Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society journal and can be seen in Appendix 5.

## **10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Winvic Construction for commissioning the work. PCA are also grateful to Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team for monitoring the work on behalf of the Local Planning Authority. The project was managed for PCA by Taleyna Fletcher. The author would like to thank the site team: Sam Corke, Clare Jackson, Tom Learmonth, Steve Porter and Sandy Pullen for their hard work. Figures accompanying this report were prepared by PCA's CAD department.



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## **11.2 Online Sources**

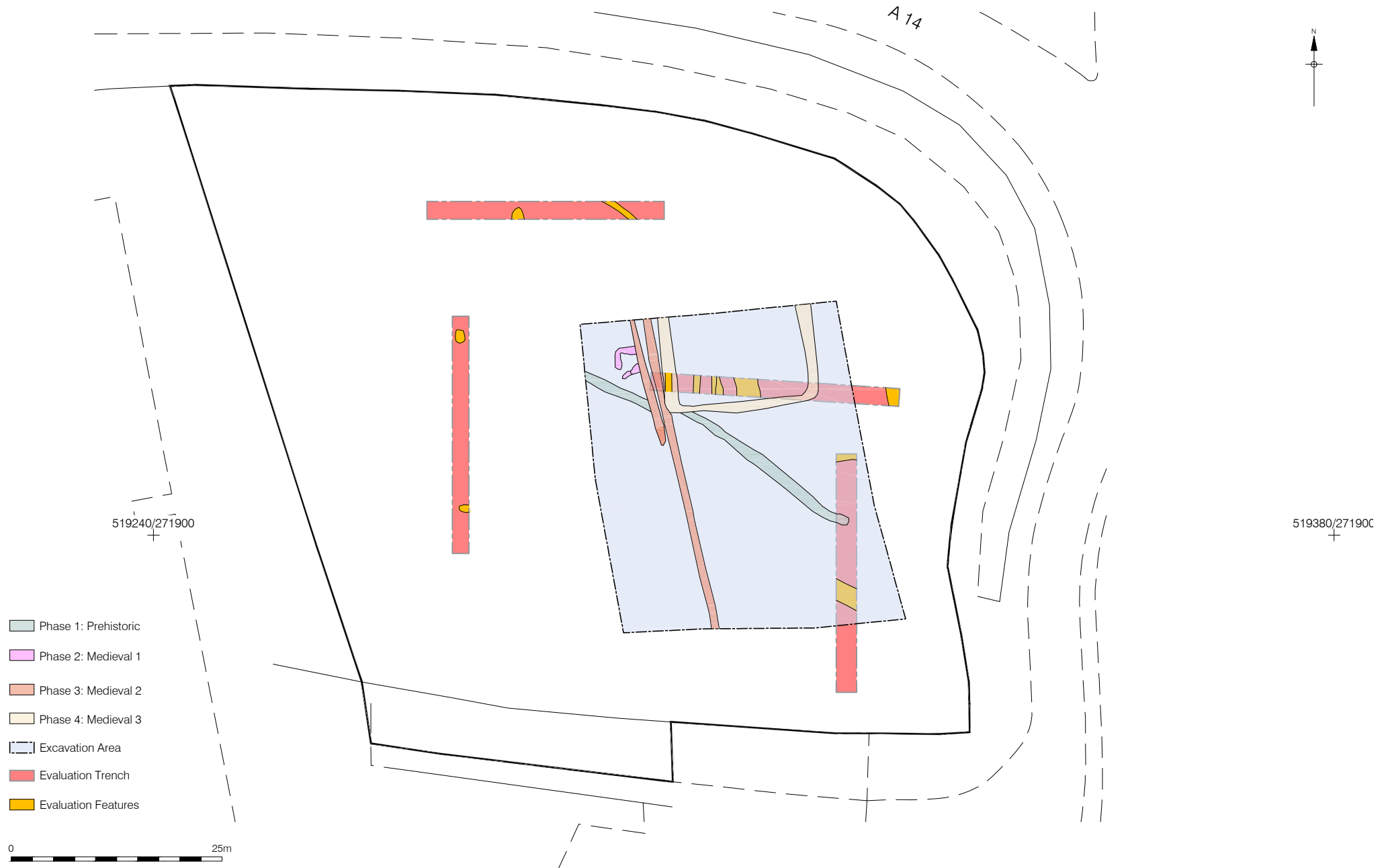
1) British Geological Survey (Accessed 03/05/2016)

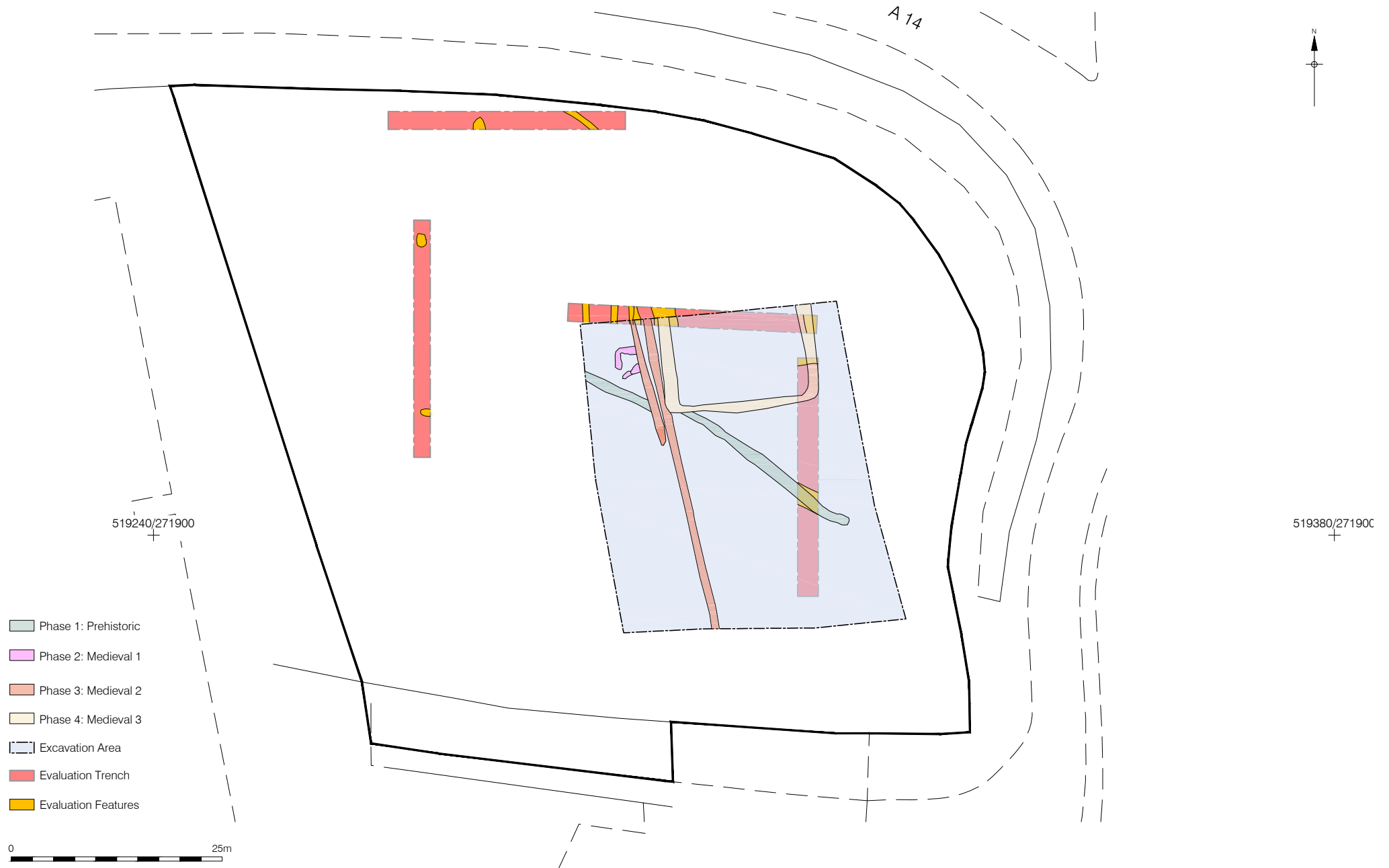
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>



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 10/05/16 RM

Figure 1  
 Site Location  
 1:2,000,000 & 1:20,000 at A4



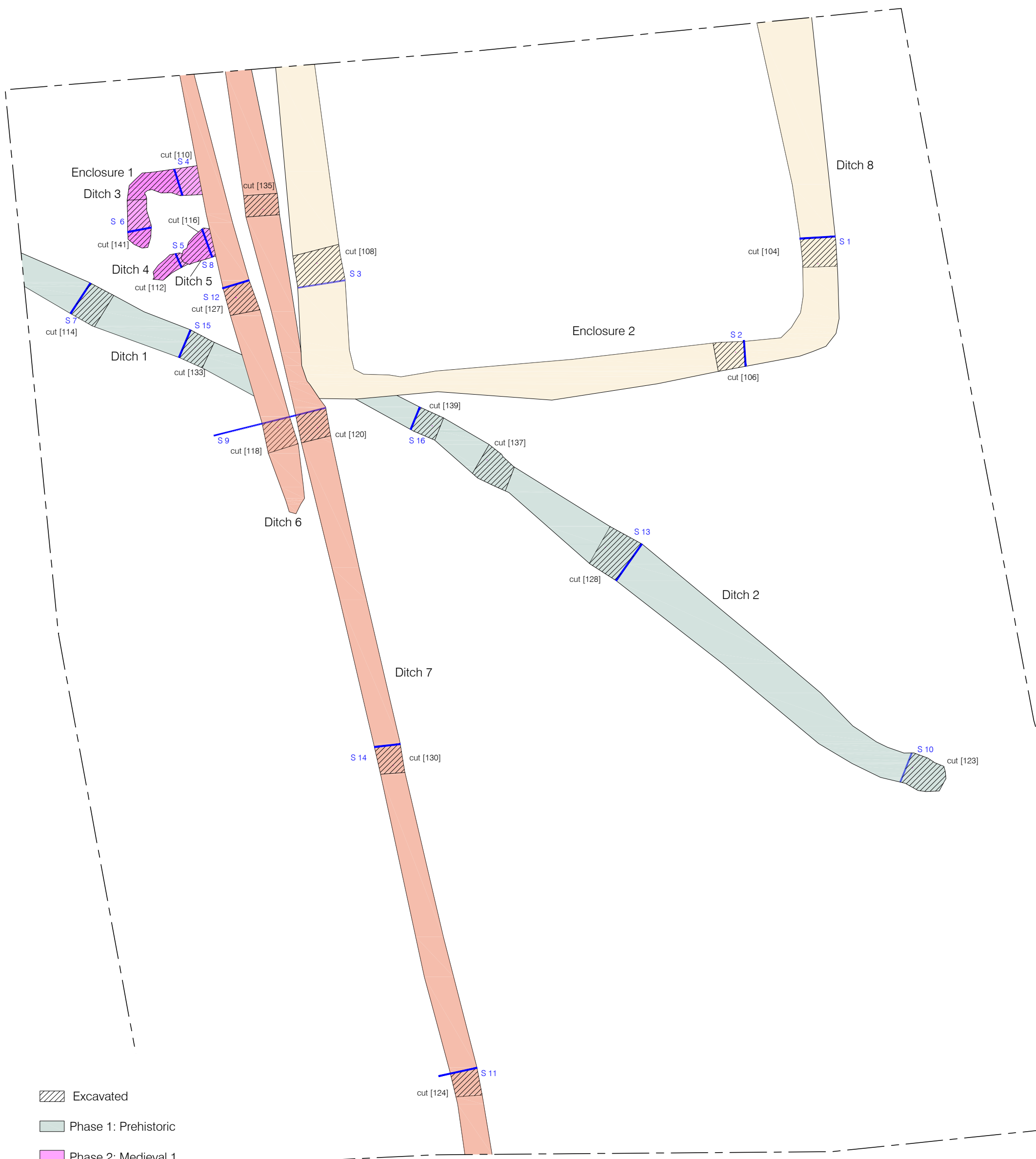


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02/08/16 RM

Figure 3  
Detailed Site Location showing possible location of AS trenches (as located by PCA)  
1:625 at A4



Excavated

Phase 1: Prehistoric

Phase 2: Medieval 1

Phase 3: Medieval 2

Phase 4: Medieval 3

0 25m



0 2m



## 12 APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: The site showing surviving ridge and furrow, view south-east



Plate 2: The site after excavation, view south





Plate 3: DITCH 1, view north-west





Plate 4: DITCH 2 slot [123], view north-west



Plate 5: DITCH 2 slot [128], view south-east





Plate 6: ENCLOSURE 1 and DITCH 6 (top), view east

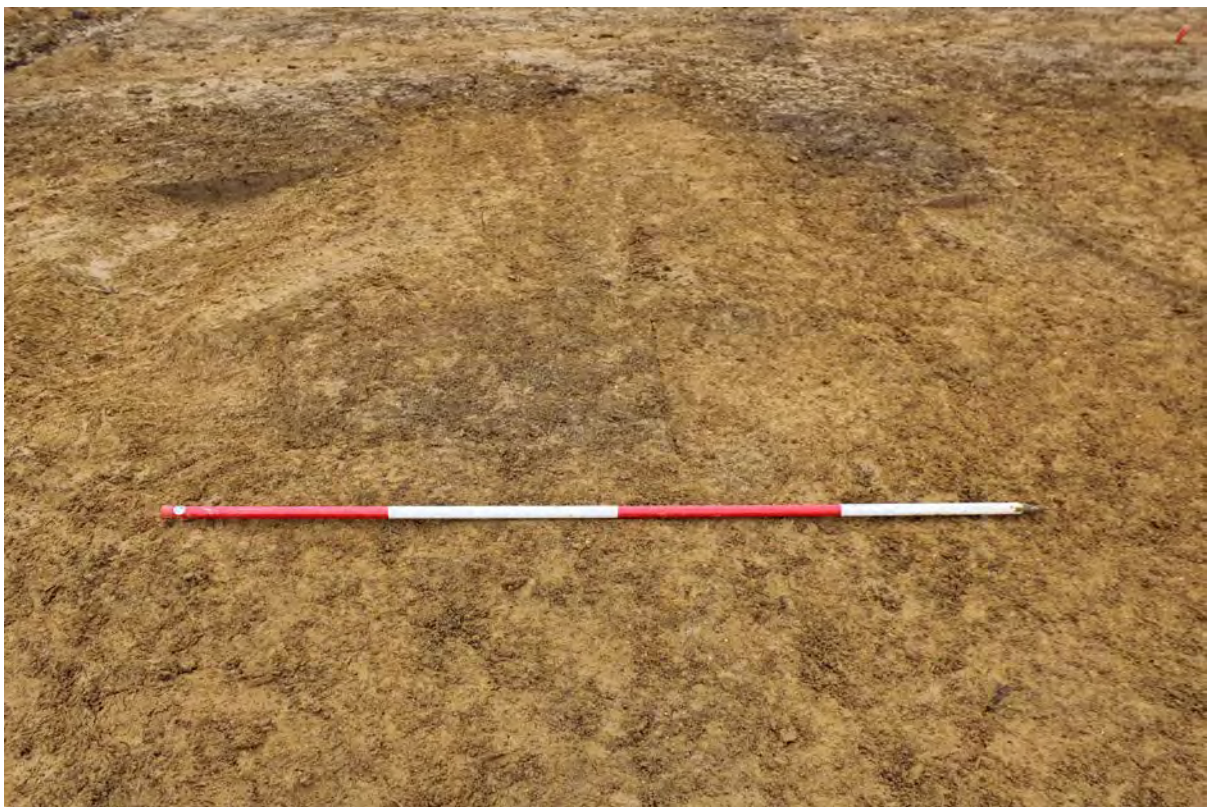


Plate 7: ENCLOSURE 1 after initial excavation, view east





Plate 8: DITCH 8 (left), DITCH 7 (centre) and DITCH 6 (right), view south



Plate 9: DITCH 8 slot [106], view east

## 13 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Context Number	Cut	Type	Category	Period	Group	Interpretation
100		Layer	Topsoil			
101		Layer	Subsoil			
102		Layer	Natural			
103	104	Fill	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 2, Ditch 8	Enclosure
104	104	Cut	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 2, Ditch 8	Enclosure
105	106	Fill	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 2, Ditch 8	Enclosure
106	106	Cut	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 2, Ditch 8	Enclosure
107	108	Fill	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 2, Ditch 8	Enclosure
108	108	Cut	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 2, Ditch 8	Enclosure
109	110	Fill	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 1, Ditch 3	Enclosure
110	110	Cut	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 1, Ditch 3	Enclosure
111	112	Fill	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 1, Ditch 4	Enclosure
112	112	Cut	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 1, Ditch 4	Enclosure
113	114	Fill	Ditch	Iron Age	Ditch 1	Boundary
114	114	Cut	Ditch	Iron Age	Ditch 1	Boundary
115	116	Fill	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 1, Ditch 5	Enclosure
116	116	Cut	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 1, Ditch 5	Enclosure
117	118	Fill	Ditch	medieval	Ditch 6	Boundary
118	118	Cut	Ditch	medieval	Ditch 6	Boundary
119	120	Fill	Ditch	medieval	Ditch 7	Boundary
120	120	Cut	Ditch	medieval	Ditch 7	Boundary
121		Layer		medieval		
122	123	Fill	Ditch	Iron Age	Ditch 2	Boundary
123	123	Cut	Ditch	Iron Age	Ditch 2	Boundary
124	124	Cut	Ditch	medieval	Ditch 7	Boundary
125	124	Fill	Ditch	medieval	Ditch 7	Boundary
126	127	Fill	Ditch	medieval	Ditch 6	Boundary
127	127	Cut	Ditch	medieval	Ditch 6	Boundary
128	128	Cut	Ditch	Iron Age	Ditch 2	Boundary
129	128	Fill	Ditch	Iron Age	Ditch 2	Boundary
130	130	Cut	Ditch	medieval	Ditch 7	Boundary
131	130	Fill	Ditch	medieval	Ditch 7	Boundary
132	133	Fill	Ditch	Iron Age	Ditch 1	Boundary
133	133	Cut	Ditch	Iron Age	Ditch 1	Boundary
134	135	Fill	Ditch	medieval	Ditch 7	Boundary
135	135	Cut	Ditch	medieval	Ditch 7	Boundary
136	137	Fill	Ditch	Iron Age	Ditch 2	Boundary
137	137	Cut	Ditch	Iron Age	Ditch 2	Boundary
138	139	Fill	Ditch	Iron Age	Ditch 2	Boundary
139	139	Cut	Ditch	Iron Age	Ditch 2	Boundary

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140	141	Fill	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 1, Ditch 3	Enclosure
141	141	Cut	Ditch	medieval	Enclosure 1, Ditch 3	Enclosure



## 14 APPENDIX 3: LITHIC CATALOGUE

Context	Type	Colour	Cortex	Condition	Recortication	Suggested dating	Comments
117	Edge trimmed blade-like flake	Semi-opaque dark brown	Rough, weathered	Good	Incipient	Meso - ENeo	Has fine, semi-steep straight scalar retouch along proximal end of left margin. Snapped in two after retouching along a pre-existing thermal fault. 48x25x5mm
107	Prismatic blade - possibly notched	Semi-opaque dark brown	None	Slightly chipped	Incipient	Meso - ENeo	Has possible inverse fine abrupt retouch on right margin forming a shallow notch. Could be post-depositional damage. Distal end is missing. >38x19x3mm
138	Decortication flake	Translucent dark grey	Rough, weathered	Good	Incipient	Prehistoric	C. 90% of dorsal covered by cortex. 28x21x6mm



## 15 APPENDIX 4: CHARRED PLANT MACROFOSSILS AND OTHER REMAINS

Sample number	Context number	Cut	Volume (litres)	Vol (ml)	Flot					
					Charcoal	Seeds (uncharred)	Seeds (charred)	Grains	Mollusca	Other
1	107	108	20	6	1					Roots (2)
2	122	123	20	30						Wood (4) Roots/plant material (2) Seed coat (1)
3	126	127	30	30						Roots (2) Wood (4)
4	131	130	20	38						Roots (2) Wood (3) Insect remains (1) Coal (1) Plant material (2)
5	132	133	30	9						Roots (2) Wood (3) Plant material (2)
6	109	110	60	100	1	Rumex (1)				Wood (3) Roots (3) Plant material (2) Coal (1) Seed coat (1)

Key: 1- Occasional, 2- fairly frequent, 3- frequent, 4- abundant

## **16 APPENDIX 5: NOTE FOR PCAS JOURNAL**

### **Brampton, Great North Road, Land at Brampton Hut**

TL 1930 7192 (PCA report 12564)

M Slater

An archaeological excavation identified two main phases of field system, defined by boundary ditches, and two rectilinear enclosures. The earliest activity comprised two ditches on a northwest-southeast alignment. Finds were scarce owing to the agricultural character of the ditches, but the alignment of the ditches was the same as possible Iron Age field systems and enclosures seen in the field to the south-east of the site, indicating that these boundaries may also be part of a later prehistoric landscape. In the 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries a new field system, possibly part of a dispersed farmstead, on a different alignment was established. Two rectilinear enclosures and two boundary ditches, all on a broadly north-south or east-west alignment, were constructed in the northern half of the site. The small finds assemblage indicates that these features were not immediately close to any areas of settlement, which may have been situated to the north of the excavation area.

## 17 APPENDIX 6: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-250931

### Project details

Project name	Land at Brampton Hut, Great North Road, Cambridgeshire: Archaeological Excavation. Post-Excavation Assessment
Short description of the project	<p>This report describes the results of archaeological excavation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on land at Brampton Hut, Great North Road, Cambridgeshire (centred on NGR TL 1930 7192) between 30th March and 6th April 2016. The archaeological work was commissioned by Winvic Construction, in response to a planning condition attached to the construction of a new retail area and landscaping. The aim of the work was to preserve by record any archaeological remains which would be damaged or destroyed by the new development. The excavation identified two main phases of field system, defined by boundary ditches, and two rectilinear enclosures. The earliest activity comprised two ditches on a northwest-southeast alignment. Finds were scarce owing to the agricultural character of the ditches, but the alignment of the ditches was the same as possible Iron Age field systems and enclosures seen in the field to the south-east of the site, indicating that these boundaries may also be part of a later prehistoric landscape. In the 12th-14th centuries a new field system, possibly part of a dispersed farmstead, on a different alignment was established. Two rectilinear enclosures and two boundary ditches, all on a broadly north-south or east-west alignment, were constructed in the northern half of the site. The small finds assemblage indicates that these features were not immediately close to any areas of settlement, which may have been situated to the north of the excavation area.</p>
Project dates	Start: 30-03-2016 End: 06-04-2016
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	ECB4544 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	DITCH Late Prehistoric

Monument type	ENCLOSURE Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	FLINT Early Neolithic
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Uncertain
Investigation type	"Open-area excavation"
Prompt	Planning condition

#### Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE HUNTINGDONSHIRE BRAMPTON Land at Brampton Hut, Great North Road, Cambridgeshire
Study area	0.2 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 1930 7192 52.331982066613 -0.248994738404 52 19 55 N 000 14 56 W Point

#### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	Cambridge HET
Project design originator	Mary-Anne Slater
Project director/manager	Taleyna Fletcher
Project supervisor	Mary-Anne Slater

#### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
Physical Archive ID	ECB4544
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones", "Ceramics", "Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store

Digital Archive ID	ECB4544
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Database","Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
Paper Archive ID	ECB4544
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Plan","Report","Section"

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### **Project bibliography 1**

	A forthcoming report
Publication type	
Title	Land at Brampton Hut, Great North Road, Cambridgeshire: Archaeological Excavation. Post-Excavation Assessment
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Slater, M.
Date	2016
Issuer or publisher	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Place of issue or publication	Cambridge

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