

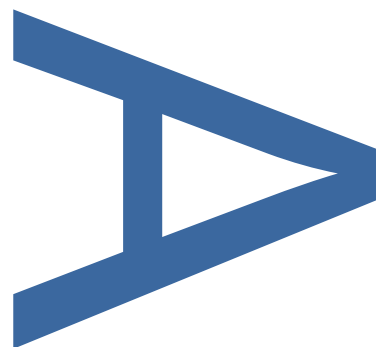
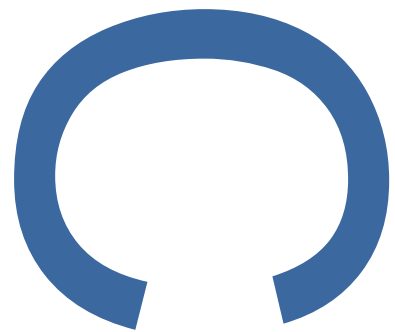
**LAND AT 5 MILL ROAD, FEN
DRAYTON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE: AN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH
EVALUATION**



PCA REPORT NO: R12887

SITE CODE: ECB5106

MAY 2017



LAND AT 5 MILL ROAD, FEN DRAYTON,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH
EVALUATION

Quality Control

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Land at 5 Mill Road, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

Local Planning Authority: South Cambridgeshire

Planning Reference: S/3436/16/FL

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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 5 Mill Road, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 3284 6806) between the 4th and the 5th May 2017. The archaeological work was commissioned by Ian Waters in response to a planning condition attached to the construction of 2 detached residential dwellings with associated access and landscaping. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the proposed development area.

The principal result of the evaluation was a possible ditch terminus in Trench 1 which contained four sherds of Mid Neolithic Peterborough Ware (c. 3400-2500 BC). Burnt flint was also recovered from the ditch, burnt in a manner indicative of being in or close to a hearth. Also present in Trench 1 were two further ditches and two postholes, all undated. Present in Trench 2 was a shallow curvilinear feature, potentially representing a roundhouse drip gully, and a ditch terminus, both of which were undated.

The results of the evaluation are in keeping with the known archaeology of the area, Neolithic pottery was found in pits during an excavation at Church Farm, Fenstanton and a Neolithic spearhead was also found in Fenstanton. Cropmarks of potential Bronze Age barrows and undated enclosures are also present in the field immediately north-west of Mill Road.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land at 5 Mill Road, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire, CB24 4ST (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 3284 6806) from the 4th to the 5th May 2017 (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by Ian Waters in response to an archaeological planning condition attached to the construction of two detached residential dwellings within an overall total development area of 1.7ha new residential dwellings, with associated access, car-parking and landscaping (Planning Reference S/3436/16/FL). The plot consists of an area of former nursery. A condition for planning consent requiring archaeological work has been placed on the site due to the high archaeological potential of the area.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Peter Crawley of PCA (Crawley 2017) in response to a Brief for archaeological evaluation issued by Gemma Stewart (Stewart 2017) 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 Two x 20m long trenches were excavated in the footprints of the new buildings.
- 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 area is underlain by Oxford Clay Formation - Mudstone, a sedimentary bedrock which formed approximately 156 to 165 million years ago in the Jurassic Period in a local environment previously dominated by shallow seas. This is overlain by river terrace deposits of sand and gravel, superficial deposits which formed up to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period in a local environment previously dominated by rivers (BGS 2017).

2.2 Topography

2.2.1 The site lies on land previously given over to horticultural nurseries. The River Ouse flows west to east approximately 2.5km to the north of the development site. A stream 300m to the south-east flows north to join the river. The site lies close to the 10m contour, the topography being generally flat.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 General

3.1.1 This archaeological and historical background has been drawn from the archaeological design brief (Stewart 2017) and the available 'grey literature' reports.

3.2 Palaeolithic to Mesolithic

3.2.1 The site lies close to the Cambridgeshire fen-edge, areas often associated with prehistoric exploitation and settlement, and as such was likely to have been favoured for settlement during the prehistoric periods.

3.2.2 The earliest activity in the area is represented by CHER 01694, which comprises Palaeolithic artefacts including an axe, a blade and a flake, unearthed at Fenstanton Road gravel pit.

3.3 Neolithic and Bronze Age

3.3.1 Further flint-work including a Neolithic spearhead (CHER 03471) and a barbed and tanged arrowhead of Bronze Age date (CHER 01797) are also recorded within the study area.

3.3.2 Four ring ditches observed on aerial photographs (CHER 08825) are interpreted as probable Bronze Age barrows. These are present in the field immediately to the north-west of the site. Also present in this field are the cropmarks of enclosures.

3.4 Iron Age and Roman

3.4.1 To the south of the site (CHER 08827) cropmarks suggest the presence of two phases of enclosures, potentially of later prehistoric date. Many other cropmarks derived from Google Earth images were recorded in 2006 lying adjacent to CHER 08827. Archaeological trenching along the proposed re-routing and widening of the A14 dual carriageway found evidence of an early boundary system formed of shallow ditches and a later phase of double boundary ditches orientated on a different alignment.

3.4.2 Further cropmarks to the south of Fen Drayton may be field systems of Iron

Age to Roman date (MCB 20968). Part of a Roman farmstead of the 2nd to 4th centuries AD was recorded during archaeological excavations immediately north of the site. Three probable buildings were identified, together with a metalled yard and associated features (HER CB 14806; TL 54480 60946).

- 3.4.3 Roman occupation and activity in the area around Fen Drayton was on a considerable scale. The substantial Roman town of Dvroliponte (later known as Cambridge), centred around Castle Hill, lies c. 5km to the south-east of the site. In the wider area, important Roman settlements have been investigated at Godmanchester, St Neots and Great Chesterford.
- 3.4.4 Roman-period activity is represented by the discovery of a Roman hoard (CHER 00464) in the vicinity of Fen Drayton. Other finds including Roman coins have been unearthed around the area, such as CHER 00876. Roman pottery was found at CHER 03473.
- 3.4.5 Roman inhumation burials have previously been found at Middleton's Farm, Fen Drayton. The evidence consisted of the skeletons of two adults and a child (CHER 03330). A further Roman inhumation has been recorded at CHER 03495.
- 3.4.6 Around 500m to the north-west of the site, CHER 08829 records ditches forming parts of Roman field systems. The same field system has been recorded elsewhere as MCB20414 and CB15738. Extensive quarrying in the eastern part of the field may have destroyed further evidence of associated activity.
- 3.4.7 To the south-west of the development, CHER 09666 records an extensive complex of features observed as cropmarks which were recorded as part of the Cambridgeshire NAIS project. The site is interpreted as an Iron Age to Roman settlement formed of linear features with rectangular and circular enclosures.
- 3.4.8 Closer to the centre of the Fen Drayton village, evaluation (CHER 15738) in the grounds of Wilderspin Garage revealed evidence for a Roman field

system on the same alignment to those already identified from cropmarks. Although a considerable amount of the activity was medieval, the small amount of Roman pottery recovered, of 1st–3rd century date, suggested that an as yet unidentified early to mid-Roman settlement may have existed in the vicinity. Evidence for a Roman field was later revealed by excavation in December 2003 (ECB4488). Further evidence is likely to have been disrupted by quarrying.

3.5 Anglo-Saxon and Early Medieval

3.5.1 There has been very little of Anglo-Saxon date found in the vicinity of the site. The A14 Fieldwalking survey and evaluation, Ellington to Fen Ditton, 2009 (ECB3079) recorded Middle Saxon pottery as part of multi-period find scatters.

3.5.2 The settlement of Fen Drayton was recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086. It had a taxable value of 4.5 geld units. There were 1 villager, 5 smallholders and 3 cottagers recorded in the settlement, and 2 ploughlands with resources including meadowlands. The overlordship had passed from the Saxon Edeva (the fair) in 1066 to a Norman lord Count Alan (of Brittany) by 1086. By 1086 there were 5 freemen recorded in the settlement. (Phillimore reference: 14,56)

3.6 Late Medieval and Post-Medieval

3.6.1 Medieval activity in the area is focused around Saint Mary the Virgin's Church, Fen Drayton (CB14837). The church was constructed in the 12th-century, although much of present structure dates to the early-14th-century or later. As the development site lies some way south of the historic core of the village, there is little in the way of medieval activity recorded close to it, although it is likely that some of the as yet undated cropmarks are of this date and relate to medieval arable fields.

3.6.2 Aside from the references in Domesday Book, archaeological investigations have provided some information about the medieval origins of the village. Trial trenching to the rear of Manor Farm House, High Street, Fen Drayton (MCB16295) revealed a possible ditch that may date to the medieval period.

The site also appeared to provide evidence for medieval and post-medieval agriculture and it is thought that the attribution of 'Manor' to the farm may indicate that a high-status medieval dwelling lay close to the centre of the village.

- 3.6.3 Multi-period remains excavated at Wilderspin Garage (MCB20414) included eleven ditches dating from the 12th–14th century. Small amounts of dating evidence were recovered from these ditches, which indicated that the core of any medieval settlement was some distance away.
- 3.6.4 Exploitation of the fenland resources probably formed a major component of the medieval rural economy. A series of linear features recorded from LiDAR data relate to possible medieval and post-medieval field systems (MCB 20030). Ditched enclosures and eroded medieval ridge and furrow were identified at MCB 20031.
- 3.6.5 A post-medieval windmill is recorded at CHER 03472, evidence derived from the 1841 Inclosure map.
- 3.6.6 The Post-Medieval activity largely takes the form of listed and historic buildings which are gathered towards the historic core of the village some distance to the north of the site. Of note was an 18th-century dovecot located at Dutch House CHER 10413.
- 3.6.7 The parks and gardens of Fen Drayton house, now built over, recorded at CHER 12082. The historical remains included a kitchen garden, glasshouse and orchard.

3.7 Undated and multi-period

- 3.7.1 There are several areas of largely undated field-systems and enclosures recorded within the search area. These include: CHER 08828, 08829, MCB 18446, MCB 22866. They are likely to relate to several different periods.
- 3.7.2 The site lay on the north edge of the area of the A14 Fieldwalking survey and evaluation, Ellington to Fen Ditton undertaken in 2009. This project unearthed several artefact scatters including Neolithic and Early Bronze Age

flint, Roman and Middle Saxon pottery.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Excavation and Sampling

4.1.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation for the evaluation proposed the excavation of two trial trenches, distributed across the site (Figure 2).

4.1.2 Ground reduction was carried out under archaeological supervision using a 15-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.

4.1.6 Discrete features such as pits and postholes were least 50% excavated.

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 (ClfA 2014; 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. The evaluation identified a ditch terminus, which contained four sherds of Mid Neolithic Peterborough Ware pottery, and a possible roundhouse drip gully, two ditches and two postholes, all undated.

5.2 Trench 1

5.2.1 Trench 1 contained three ditches, aligned north-east to south-west and north-west to south-east, and two postholes.

5.2.2 Ditch [105] (Plate 3, Figure 3, Section 1) was located at the south-east end of the trench. It was 0.95m wide and 0.30m deep with steep sides and a concave base. It had two fills: a basal fill of mid-orangish brown silty sand (104) and an upper fill of mid-blackish brown sandy silt (103) which contained four sherds (26g) of Mid Neolithic Peterborough Ware pottery, a Mesolithic-Early Neolithic small blade-like flake, 20 pieces of heavily burnt flint and wood charcoal (See Sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.4).

5.2.3 Ditch [111] (Plate 4, Figure 3, Section 4) was located north-west of [105]. It was 0.70m wide and 0.28m deep with steep straight sides and a flattish base. It had a single fill of mid-orangish brown clayey silty sand (110).

5.2.4 Ditch [113] (Plate 5, Figure 3, Section 5) was located in the central part of the trench. The ditch was 0.55m wide and 0.09m deep with steep concave sides and a flattish base. It had a single fill of mid-orangish brown silty sand (112). It was truncated by Posthole [107] and a modern pipe.

5.2.5 Posthole [109] (Figure 3, Section 3) was located in the south-east of the trench. It was square in plan, measuring 0.35m wide and 0.04m deep with steep sides and a flattish base. It had a single fill of mid-greyish brown silty sand (108).

5.2.6 Posthole [107] (Figure 3, Section 2) was located in the centre of the trench. It was sub-circular in plan, measuring 0.24m wide and 0.07m deep with steep

sides and a concave base. It had a single fill of mid-greyish brown silty sand (106), which contained Small Find 1 and coal (See Sections 6.3 and 6.4).

TRENCH 1	Figures 2-3		Plate 1	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 20m	Level of Natural (m OD): 10.48-10.55		
Deposit	Context No.	Average Depth (m)		
		NW End	SE End	
Topsoil	(100)	0.23	0.26	
Subsoil	(101)	0.23-0.64+	0.26-0.79	
Natural	(102)	Not reached	0.79+	
Summary				
Trench 1 was located close to the north-western boundary of the site.				
The trench contained three ditches, one dated to the Mid Neolithic period, and two postholes. Modern intrusions, consisting of drains and services, had impacted on the overburden deposits and partially obscured some of the archaeological features.				

5.3 Trench 2

5.3.1 The trench contained two ditches, one of which was curvilinear. Both ditches were undated.

5.3.2 Ditch [115] (Plate 7, Figure 4, Section 6) was 0.40m wide and 0.09m deep with moderately steep rounded sides and a concave base. It had a single fill of mid-orangish brown silty sand (114).

5.3.3 Ditch [117] (Plate 6, Figure 4, Section 7) was 0.57m wide and 0.10m deep with moderately steep rounded sides and a concave base. It had a single fill of mid-orangish brown silty sand (116).

TRENCH 2	Figures 2, 4		Plate 2	
Trench Alignment: N-S	Length: 20m	Level of Natural (m OD): 10.58-10.61		
Deposit	Context No.	Average Depth (m)		
		N End	S End	
Topsoil	(100)	0.25	0.24	
Subsoil	(101)	0.25-0.72	0.24-0.81	
Natural	(102)	0.72+	0.81+	
Summary				

Trench 2 was located in the north corner of the site.

There were two undated ditches in the trench, one of which was curvilinear.

6 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1 The Flint

By Barry Bishop (pers. comm.)

6.1.1 Context [103] Small blade-like flake in good condition made from an opaque dark grey speckled flint. It is well struck using a systematic blade-based reduction system which will date it to the Mesolithic or Early Neolithic periods. It measures 17mm long by 12mm wide and is 3mm thick.

6.1.2 Context [103] sample <1>. This contains 20 pieces of variably but mostly heavily burnt flint fragments weighing 34g. Two of fragments had been struck prior to being burnt. The variable intensities to which the flint is burnt is consistent being in or close to a hearth. The two struck pieces are both very fragmentary and little more can be said other than they confirm prehistoric flint working occurring at the site.

6.1.3 The samples from context [110] and [113] also contained small fragments of flint but none of these appear to have been worked or burnt.

6.2 The Prehistoric Pottery

By Sarah Percival

6.2.1 A total of four sherds weighing 26g were collected from ditch [105] in Trench 1. All the sherds are Middle Neolithic Peterborough Ware. The pottery is in poor condition.

Feature	Feature type	Context	Fabric	Vessel type	Spot date	Quantity	Weight (g)
105	Ditch	103	Q1F	Peterborough Ware	Mid Neolithic	3	13
			Q1s	Peterborough Ware	Mid Neolithic	1	13
Total						4	26

Table 1: Quantity and weight of pottery by feature

Methodology

6.2.2 The assemblage was analysed in accordance with the Prehistoric Ceramic Research Group General Policies and Guidelines for Analysis and

Publication (revised 3rd edition, PCRG 2010). The total assemblage was studied and a full catalogue was prepared. The sherds were examined using a handheld lens (x10 magnification). Vessel form was recorded; R representing rim sherds, B base sherds, D decorated sherds, U undecorated body sherds, C complete vessels and P for complete profiles. The sherds were counted and weighed to the nearest whole gram. Decoration, surface treatment, residues and abrasion were also noted.

Description

- 6.2.3 The assemblage comprises two rims. A 'T' shaped rim made of fine clay with sparse angular flint is decorated with impressed cord maggots on the rim top and interior surfaces. The second rim is of fine sandy fabric with sparse grog and shell similar to Peterborough Ware from Etton (Kinnes 1998, 161). This rim is direct rounded with a slight internal lip and is also decorated with impressed cord maggots forming a herringbone motif on the rim edge and shoulder and impressed maggots in straight lines on the rim interior. The form and decoration of the sherds suggests that they are of the Mortlake substyle (Gibson and Kinnes 1997).

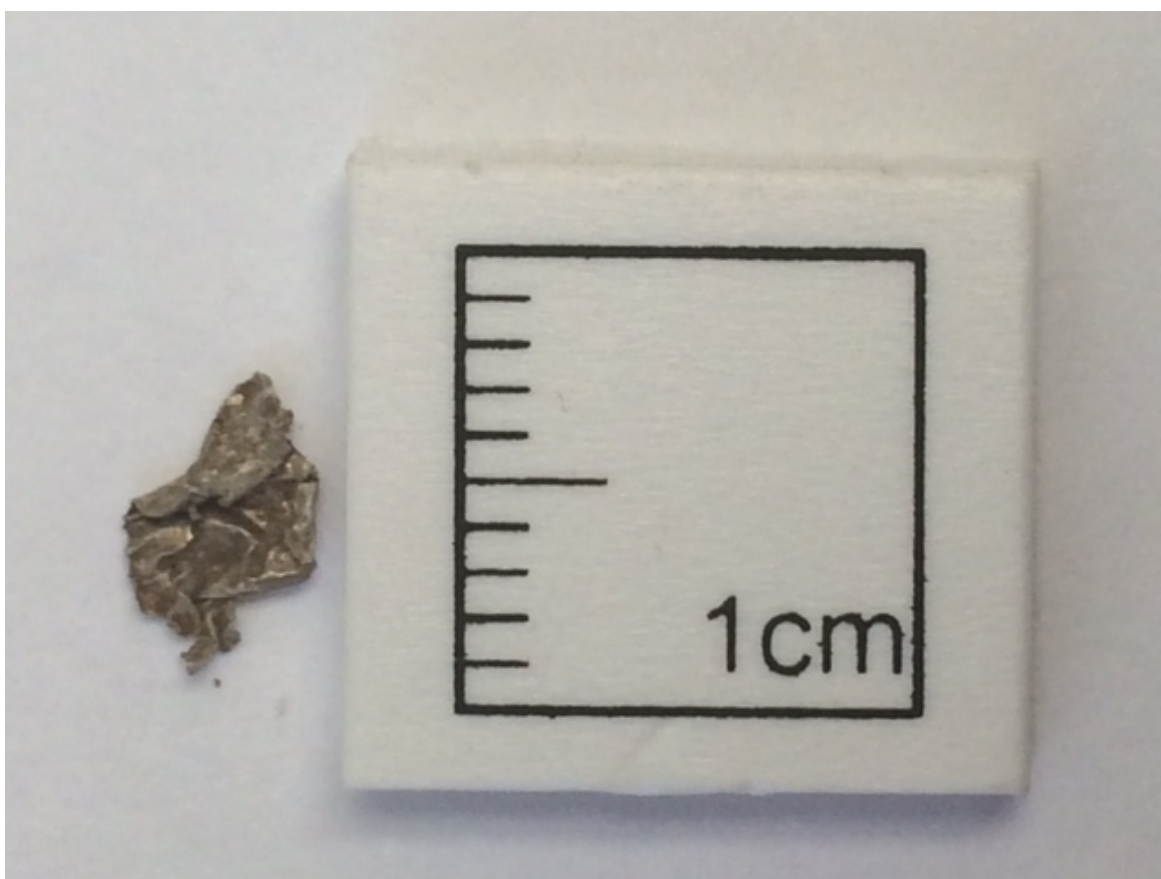
Discussion

- 6.2.4 Both the mix of flint tempered and grog and sand tempered fabrics and the extensive use of impressed cord decoration is common to many Peterborough Ware finds from the region with similar sherds being recovered from Springfield Cursus (Brown 2001, fig 22. 116-120) and the causewayed enclosures at Etton and Haddenham (Pryor 1998; Evans and Hodder 2006, fig.5.32, 5 & 7). Peterborough Ware has also been found locally at the monument complex at Godmanchester though only in very small quantities (2 sherds 31g, Percival forthcoming). Peterborough Ware dates to c.3400-2500 BC (Gibson and Kinnes 1997), although an end date for the main period of its use may occur slightly earlier between 2900-2700 BC (A Tinsley pers. comm.).

6.3 The Metalwork

Ruth Prior

- 6.3.1 SF 1 was recovered from fill 106 of posthole [107], <2>.
- 6.3.2 It is a thin fragment of beaten sheet metal, possibly silver. The surfaces are creased and folded. It measures 5mm by 4mm and less than 0.5mm in thickness. It weighs less than 0.5g.
- 6.3.3 The fragile nature of the sheet suggests that it was most likely applied to another object as decoration. The date of the object is uncertain, however it is possibly post-medieval or modern.



SF 1

6.4 Environmental Assessment

By Kate Turner

Introduction

6.4.1 This report summarises the findings of the rapid assessment of five bulk samples taken during the excavation of land at 5 Mill Road, Fen Drayton. These samples were taken from four ditches and a posthole, the context information for which is given in Table 2.

6.4.2 The aim of this assessment is to:

- Give an overview of the contents of the assessed samples;
- Determine the environmental potential of these samples;
- Establish whether any further analysis is necessary.

Context No.	Cut	Context type	Context category	Trench number	Interpretation
103	105	Fill	Ditch	1	Ditch terminus (?)
106	107	Fill	Posthole	1	Posthole
110	111	Fill	Ditch	1	Ditch
112	113	Fill	Ditch	1	Enclosure ditch (?)
114	115	Fill	Ditch	2	Roundhouse gully (?)

Table 2: Context information for environmental samples

Methodology

6.4.3 Five bulk samples, between four and thirty-two litres in volume, were processed using the flotation method; material was collected using a 300µm mesh for the light fraction and a 1mm mesh for the heavy residue. The heavy residue was then dried, sieved at 1, 2 and 4mm and sorted to extract artefacts and ecofacts. The abundance of each category of material was recorded using a non-linear scale where '1' indicates occasional occurrence (1-10 items), '2' indicates occurrence is fairly frequent (11-30 items), '3' indicates presence is frequent (31-100 items) and '4' indicates an abundance of material (>100 items).

The light residue (>300 µm), once dried, was scanned under a low-power binocular microscope to quantify the level of environmental material, such as seeds, chaff, charred grains, molluscs and charcoal. Abundance was recorded as above. A note was also made of any other significant inclusions, for example roots and modern plant material.

Results and Discussion

Residues

6.4.4 The heavy residues were poor in environmental remains; only samples <1> and <3> contained small to moderate amounts of wood charcoal. The greatest abundance of material was recorded in sample <1>, the fill of a suspected prehistoric ditch terminus, which yielded between thirty and one-hundred fragments, a proportion of which were a suitable size for species to be determined.

6.4.5 Cultural artefacts, in the form of pottery and burnt and/or struck flint were reported in samples <1>, <3> and <4>. In general, material concentrations were low (<10 pieces), with the exception of sample <1>, which contained a moderate amount of burnt flint pieces (30 – 100 pcs). A single flake of gold leaf was additionally observed, in sample <2>.

6.4.6 A full account of the material reported in the residues is given in Table 3.

Sample No.	1	2	3	4	5
Context No.	103	106	110	112	114
Feature No.	105	107	111	113	115
Volume of bulk (liters)	32	4	8	8	8
Volume of flot (milliliters)					
Method of processing	F	F	F	F	F
HEAVY RESIDUE					
Charcoal					
Charcoal <2mm	2				
Charcoal 2-4mm			1		
Charcoal >4mm	3				
Other material					
Pottery	1				
Burnt flint	3				

Sample No.	1	2	3	4	5
Context No.	103	106	110	112	114
Feature No.	105	107	111	113	115
Struck flint			1	1	
Gold leaf (?)		1			
Industrial debris	1				

Table 3: Assessment of environmental residues

Flots

6.4.7 All of the processed samples produced flots, ranging in volume from one to thirty-nine millilitres. Wood charcoal was identified in four out of five of the assessed residues, being absent in sample <5>, the fill of a suspected roundhouse gully. Moderate concentrations were reported, with the majority of deposits containing between thirty and one-hundred pieces. Material was highly fragmented, with only sample <1> containing specimens of reasonable size (>2mm in length/width).

6.4.8 Weed seeds were present throughout the assemblage, in moderate to high densities. Samples <1> and <3>, taken from the fills of two ditches, contained the greatest abundance of material, each yielding over one-hundred intact specimens. Fat-hen (*Chenopodium album*) was the most commonly observed species, being identified in four samples, though other species from the genera *Chenopodium* (goosefoots) were also widespread. Sample <1>, as well as containing a high frequency of fat-hen, also produced a moderate amount of *Rubus* sp. (brambles), along with small amounts of medick (*Medicago* sp.), *Veronica* sp. (speedwells) and *rumex/polygonum* sp. (docks/sorrels/knotweeds). Sample <3>, as well as containing one of the greatest concentrations of seed, also had the highest species diversity, with seven discrete types observed including *Juncus* sp. (rushes), *Stellaria* sp. (stitchworts) and *Solanum* sp. (nightshades). A single charred pea was additionally recognised in sample <1>.

6.4.9 In terms of other environmental remains, molluscs were scarce, with only a small number of the contemporary terrestrial burrowing species *Cecilioides acicula* being reported in sample <2>. When found in archaeological deposits this species is often interpreted as a modern intrusion. Insect

remains were observed across the assemblage, with the greatest concentration found in sample <1> (30 – 100 specimens). Four out of the five assessed samples also contained insect eggs/worm cases.

6.4.10 Root material was discovered in all of the assessed samples, in small to moderate amounts. This, along with the small amount of modern snails may be an indication that bioturbation has taken place.

6.4.11 A full account of the material reported in the flots is given in Table 4.

Sample No.		1	2	3	4	5
Context No.		103	106	110	112	114
Feature No.		105	107	111	113	115
Volume of bulk (liters)		32	4	8	8	8
Volume of flot (milliliters)		39	1	19	3	3
Method of processing		F	F	F	F	F
FLOT RESIDUE						
Charcoal						
Charcoal >1mm		3	1	1		
Charcoal <1mm		3	3	2	1	
Frag. of ID size		<5	X	X	X	
Seeds						
Atriplex sp.	Oraches					1
Chenopodium album	Fat-hen	4	2	4		3
Chenopodium sp.	Goosefoots		3	2	1	1
Juncus sp.	Rushes			2	2	3
Medicago sp.	Medicks	1				
Potamogeton sp.	Pondweeds			1		
Rubus sp.	Brambles	3		2		
Rumex/polygonum sp.	Docks/sorrels/knotweed	1	1		1	
Solanum sp.	Nightshades			1		
Stellaria sp.	Stitchworts		1	1		
Urtica sp.	Nettles		1	1		1
Veronica sp.	Speedwells	1				1
Vicia sp. (seed cases)	Peas	1				

Sample No.	1	2	3	4	5
Context No.	103	106	110	112	114
Feature No.	105	107	111	113	115
Unknown					1
Charred seeds					
Vicia sp.	Peas	1			
Unknown				1	1
Other plant macrofossils					
Roots	3	1	3	1	2
Desiccated plant material	3				
Molluscs					
Cecilioides acicula	Terrestrial		1		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other remains					
Insect remains	3	1	1	1	2
Insect eggs/worm cases	3		1	2	2
Coal		1			

Table 4: Assessment of environmental flots

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

Conclusions and Recommendations for Further Work

6.4.12 In summary, samples <1> and <3> were found to have the greatest environmental potential. Sample <1> contained both sizeable wood charcoal, which may be useful for radiocarbon dating, and an abundance of seeds. Sample <3> also contained a statistically significant seed assemblage (>100 specimens). As a result, further assessment could be suggested on the macrobotanical collections from both these deposits, as they may be able to enhance our knowledge of the local environment. This must however be balanced with the potential contamination evident from modern root material, which is particularly dense in these two contexts. There is little in the rest of the assemblage to suggest how the site functioned on a day-to-day basis, or pinpoint any particular domestic or industrial use, and therefore no further assessment is suggested on the remaining. A summary of this assessment should be included in any subsequent site publications.

7 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 The evaluation identified a ditch terminus, which contained four sherds of Mid Neolithic pottery, and a possible roundhouse drip gully, two ditches and two postholes, all undated.

7.2 Mid Neolithic Activity

7.2.1 Four sherds of Mid Neolithic Peterborough Ware pottery were recovered from a potential ditch terminus in Trench 1. Not enough of the feature was seen to determine its purpose, but the presence of fairly large sherds of Mid Neolithic pottery from a small slot is unlikely to be residual. Heavily burnt flint was recovered from the sample, burnt in a manner that is consistent with being in or close to a hearth. A residual Mesolithic-Early Neolithic small blade-like flint was also present.

7.2.2 Contemporary activity is known from the area, Neolithic Impressed Ware and Grooved Ware pottery was found in pits during an excavation at Church Farm, Fenstanton (CB15559). A Neolithic spearhead was also found in Fenstanton (HER 03471).

7.3 Undated Activity

7.3.1 All other features uncovered during the evaluation were undated. A shallow curvilinear feature, potentially a roundhouse drip gully, was recorded in Trench 2. A further shallow ditch terminus was also present in that trench. Two undated ditches and two postholes were also present in Trench 1. Cropmarks of enclosures and potential Bronze Age barrows have been mapped in the field immediately to the north-west of Mill Road. Given the close proximity of these cropmarks, it is highly likely that the undated ditches at 5 Mill Road are prehistoric also. The darker fill and shape of the postholes (and the presence of coal in [107]) indicates they are more likely to be post-medieval or modern.

7.4 Conclusions

7.4.1 The evaluation has identified a Mid Neolithic ditch and a possible roundhouse drip-gully and ditches which potentially all date to the prehistoric

period. The results are in keeping with the prehistoric activity recorded in the Fen Drayton and Fenstanton area.

- 7.4.2 The Neolithic ditch was well-preserved and associated with a moderate assemblage for the period, while the undated features were mainly shallow and ephemeral, with the exception of Ditch [111].

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Ian Waters for commissioning the work. PCA are also grateful to Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team for his advice and for monitoring the work. The author would like to thank Peter Crawley for managing the project and finally PCA's CAD department for preparing the figures.

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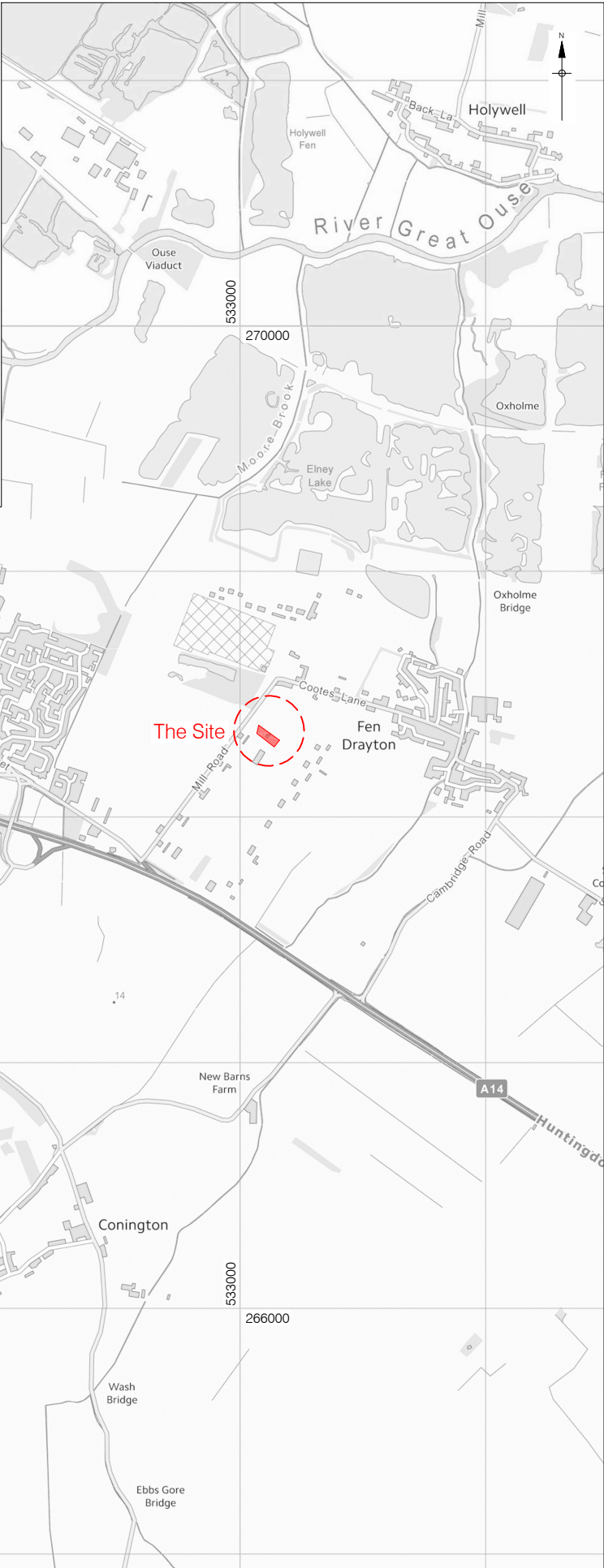
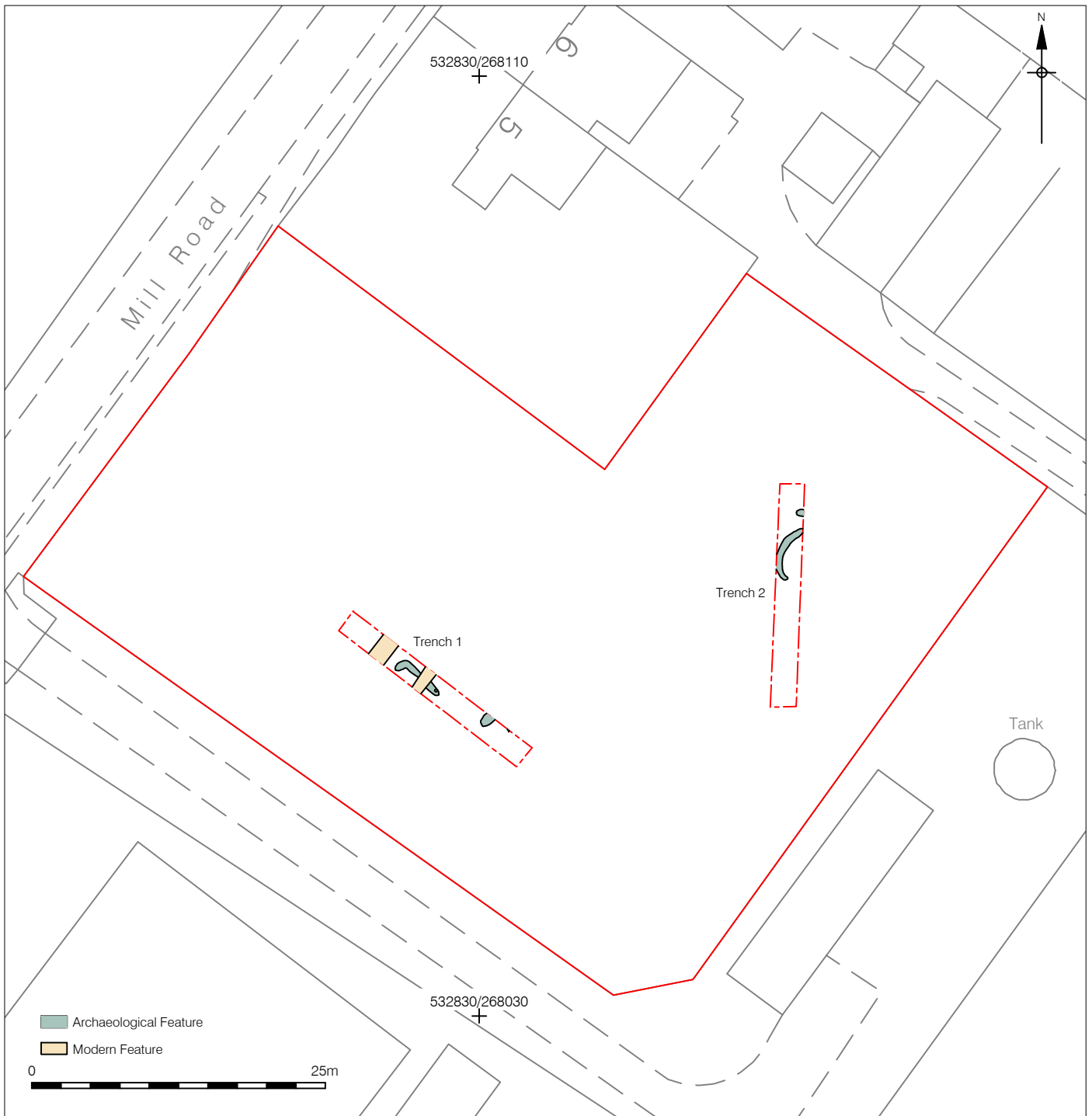


Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:2,000,000 & 1:20,000 at A4

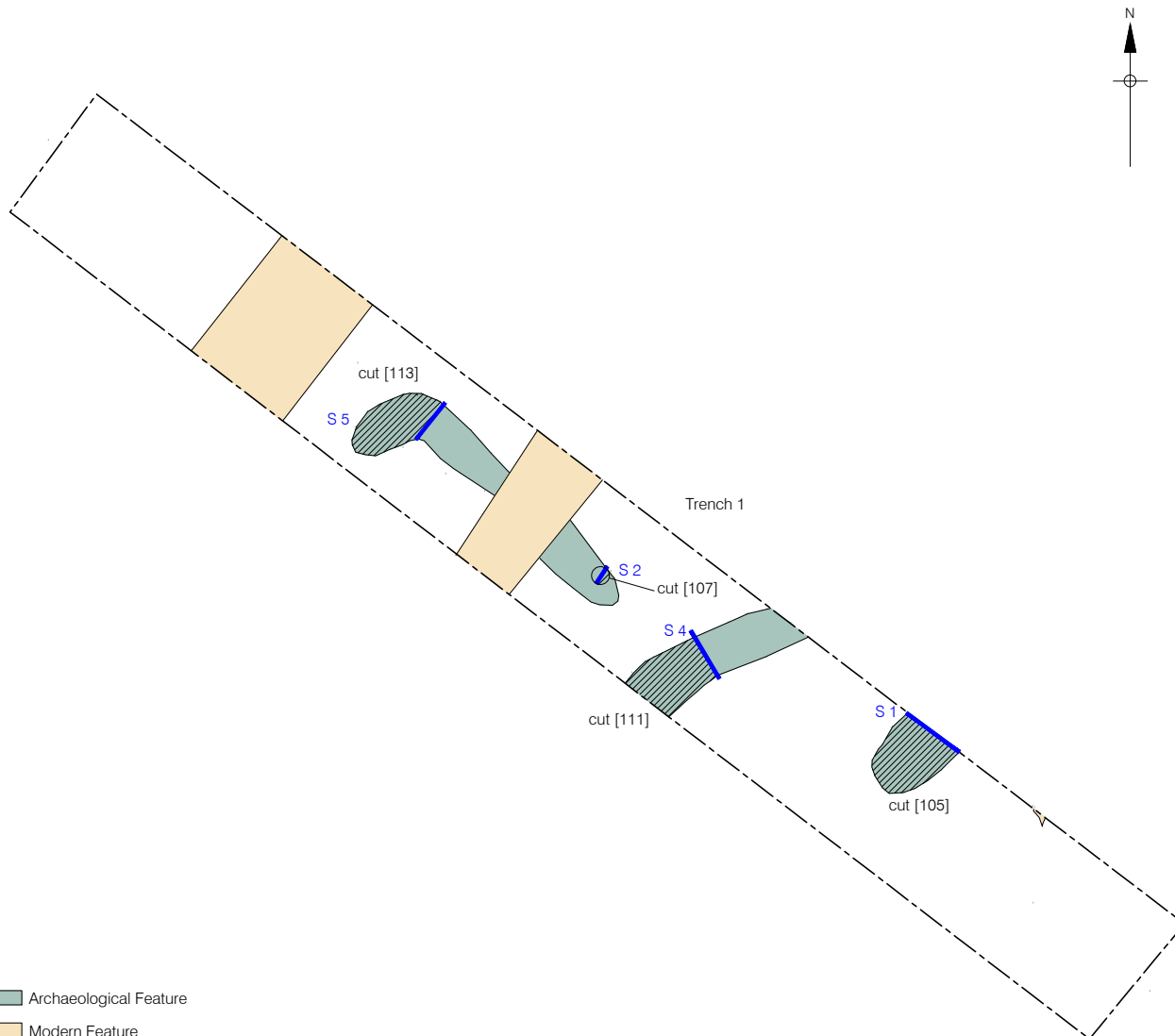


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16/05/17 RM

Figure 2
Trench Location Plan
1:500 at A4



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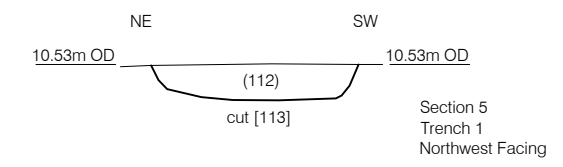
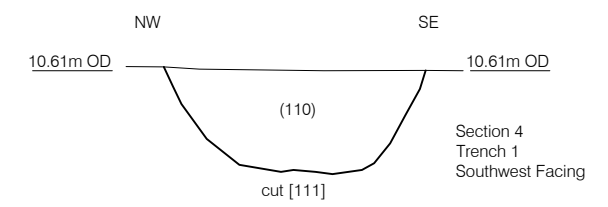
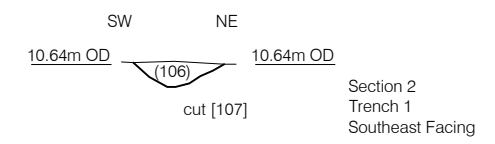
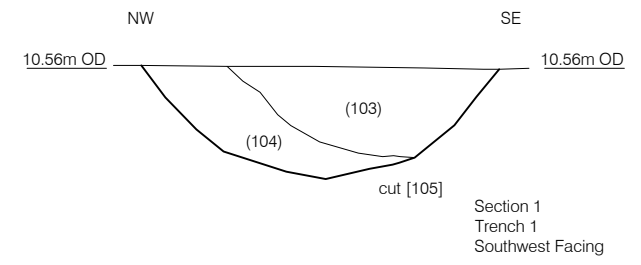
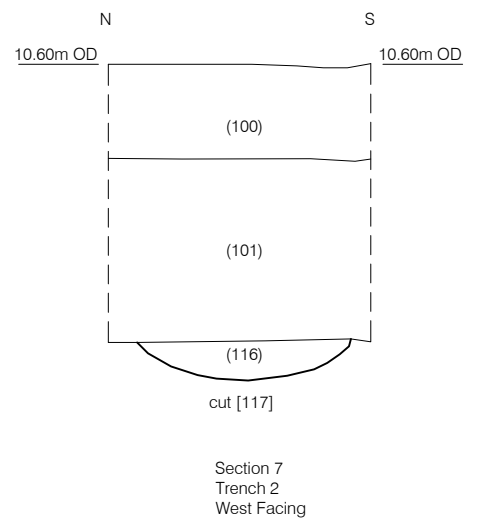
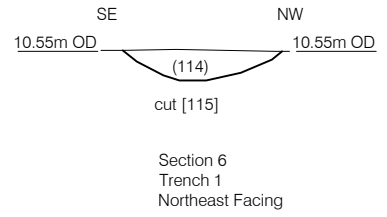
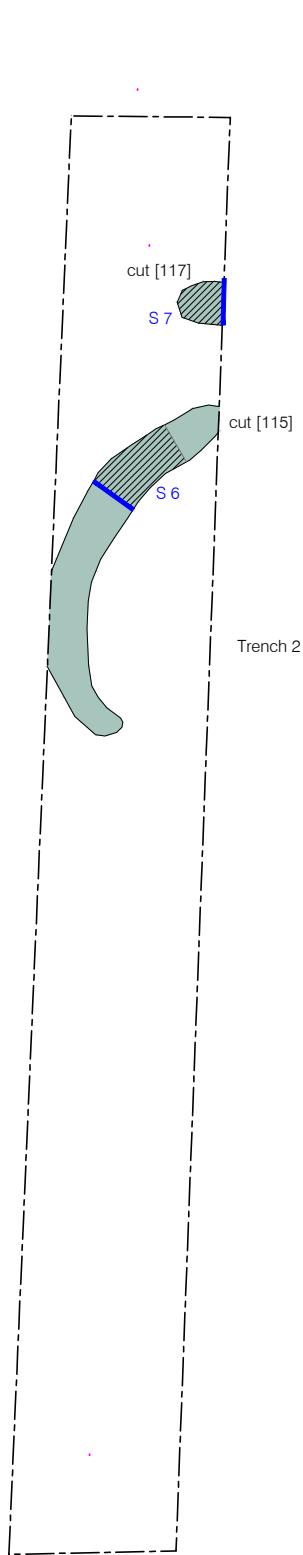




Figure 3
Plan and Sections of Trench 1
Plan 1:100 and Sections 1:20 at A4



 Archaeological Feature
 Excavated Slot



10 APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: Trench 1, view north-west



Plate 2: Trench 2, view north



Plate 3: Ditch [105], view north-east



Plate 4: Ditch [111], view north-east



Plate 5: Ditch [113], view south-east



Plate 6: Ditch [117], view east



Plate 7: Ditch [115], view south-west

11 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Trench Number
100	N/A	Layer	Topsoil	
101	N/A	Layer	Subsoil	
102	N/A	Layer	Natural	
103	105	Fill	Ditch	1
104	105	Fill	Ditch	1
105	105	Cut	Ditch	1
106	107	Fill	Posthole	1
107	107	Cut	Posthole	1
108	109	Fill	Posthole	1
109	109	Cut	Posthole	1
110	111	Fill	Ditch	1
111	111	Cut	Ditch	1
112	113	Fill	Ditch	1
113	113	Cut	Ditch	1
114	115	Fill	Ditch	2
115	115	Cut	Ditch	2
116	117	Fill	Ditch	2
117	117	Cut	Ditch	2

12 APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-285227

Project details

Project name Land at 5 Mill Road, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire: An 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 5 Mill Road, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 3284 6806) between the 4th and the 5th May 2017. The archaeological work was commissioned by Ian Waters in response to a planning condition attached to the construction of 2 detached residential dwellings with associated access and landscaping. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the proposed development area. The principal result of the evaluation was a possible ditch terminus in Trench 1 which contained four sherds of Mid Neolithic Peterborough Ware (c. 3400-2500 BC). Also present in Trench 1 were two further ditches and two postholes, all undated. Present in Trench 2 was a shallow curvilinear feature, potentially representing a roundhouse drip gully, and a ditch terminus, both of which were undated.

Project dates Start: 04-05-2017 End: 05-05-2017

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes ECB5106 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Monument type DITCH Middle Neolithic

Monument type DITCH Uncertain

Monument type GULLY Uncertain

Monument type POSTHOLE Uncertain

Significant Finds POTTERY Middle Neolithic

Methods & "Sample Trenches"

techniques

Development type Rural residential

Prompt Planning condition

Project location

Country England

Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE FEN DRAYTON
Land at 5 Mill Road, Fen Drayton

Study area 0 Square metres

Site coordinates TL 3284 6806 52.294178380138 -0.051905965574 52 17 39 N 000
03 06 W Point

Project creators

Name of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

Organisation

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originator

Project design Peter Crawley
originator

Project Peter Crawley
director/manager

Project supervisor Mary-Anne Slater

Project archives

Physical Archive Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
recipient

Physical Archive ID ECB5106

Physical Contents "Ceramics"

Digital Archive Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
recipient

Digital Archive ID ECB5106

Digital Contents "none"

Digital Media "Survey","Text"
available

Paper Archive Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
recipient

Paper Archive ID ECB5106

Paper Contents "none"

Paper Media "Context sheet","Report","Section"
available

Project bibliography

1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type

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