

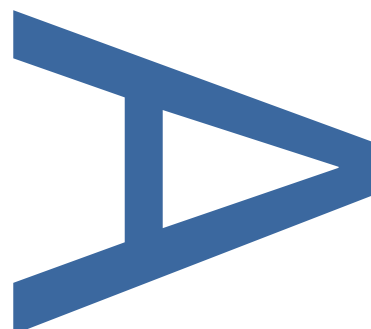
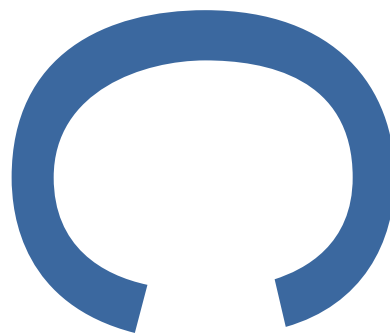
**LAND WEST OF HARRISON WAY,
ST IVES, CAMBRIDGESHIRE:**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

PCA REPORT NO: R13017

SITE CODE: ECB5163

SEPTEMBER 2017



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

LAND WEST OF HARRISON WAY, ST.IVES, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

Quality Control

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| Text Prepared by: | Mary-Anne Slater | | September 2017 |
| Graphics Prepared by: | Ray Murphy | | September 2017 |
| Graphics Checked by: | Josephine Brown | <i>Josephine Brown</i> | September 2017 |
| Project Manager Sign-off: | Christiane Meckseper | <i>Ch. Meckseper</i> | September 2017 |

| Revision No. | Date | Checked | Approved |
|--------------|------|---------|----------|
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| | | | |
| | | | |

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

Land West of Harrison Way, St Ives, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation

Local Planning Authority: Huntingdonshire District Council

Planning Reference: 16/02448/FUL

Central National Grid Reference: TL 3225 7204

Site Code: ECB5163

Report No. R13017

Written and researched by: Mary-Anne Slater
Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project Manager: Christiane Meckseper

Commissioning Client: Abbey Group

Contractor: Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Central Office
The Granary
Rectory Farm
Brewery Road
Pampisford
Cambridgeshire
CB22 3EN

Tel: 01223 845522

E-mail: cmecksper@pre-construct.com

Website: www.pre-construct.com

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September 2017

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ABSTRACT

This report describes the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on land west of Harrison Way, St Ives, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 3225 7204) between the 5th and 6th September 2017. The archaeological work was commissioned by Abbey Group in advance of commercial development of the site. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the proposed development area.

The evaluation identified undated furrows in Trench 3 and modern ditches in Trenches 1-2 and 5. The ditch in Trench 5 corresponded with a field boundary seen on 19th century mapping and aerial photographs from the 1940s.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land west of Harrison Way, St Ives, Cambridgeshire (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 3225 7204) between the 5th and 6th September 2017 (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by Abbey Group in advance of commercial development of the site.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Christiane Meckseper of PCA (Meckseper 2017).
- 1.4 The aim of the evaluation was to determine the location, date, extent, character, condition and quality of any archaeological remains on the site, to assess the significance of any such remains in a local, regional, or national context, as appropriate, and to assess the potential impact of the development proposals on the site's archaeology.
- 1.5 A total of five trial trenches were excavated and recorded.
- 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 Archaeological Stores.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Geology

2.1.1 The underlying geology of the site is Oxford Clay Formation Sedimentary Bedrock with superficial deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel alluvium (British Geological Survey 2017 and CCCHER 2017).

2.2 Topography

2.2.1 St Ives lies on the northern bank of the River Great Ouse. The proposed development site lies on the eastern side of a small stream feeding into the quarry lakes to the south and ultimately into the river. The site itself is on level ground at c. 10m AOD.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 General

3.1.1 The following archaeological background has been collated from data from the Cambridgeshire HER (licence no. 17-2938) and the Archaeological Brief (Stewart 2017). Numbers given in brackets in the following text are HER asset and event identifiers.

3.2 Previous Archaeological Investigations

3.2.1 Two aerial photographic assessments and a geophysical survey were carried out on land c.400m and 600m east and north-east of the Harrison Way (ECB994 and ECB4501 respectively). These recorded several linear anomalies, a D-shaped enclosure and medieval ridge and furrow agricultural features (discussed below).

3.2.2 A rescue excavation prior to the construction of the Needingworth bypass (ECB1042) c.820m east of Harrison Way recorded parts of a Roman settlement (discussed below).

3.3 Early Prehistoric

3.3.1 There are very few early prehistoric find spots or sites within the surroundings of the proposed development area. Records in the HER include one Palaeolithic flint flake (HER 01669), assemblages of Palaeolithic flint flakes and tools (HER 01691, 03595), a Neolithic flint scraper (HER 01925) and a Bronze Age flint blade (HER 02029), all of which were recovered during gravel quarrying to the south of Harrison Way.

3.4 Late Prehistoric to Roman (800BC – 410AD)

3.4.1 The aerial photographic surveys, discussed above, recorded a cropmark complex (HER 08275) comprising a large number of regular, rectilinear enclosures with a double ditched enclosure forming a boundary to the complex. There are also broad-ditched, curvilinear enclosures and associated linear ditches. Excavation at the southern end of the complex proved some of the enclosures to be of Roman date (HER 11668) but it is likely that the cropmark complex represents more than one phase of occupation.

3.4.2 A Roman settlement was excavated c.820m east of Harrison Way in 1994 (HER 11668, ECB1042). The excavation concentrated on the southern end of the cropmark complex (HER 08275) and uncovered two possible linear boundary ditches and a portion of a circular, polygonal palisaded and ditched enclosure with associated postholes and linear features. Burnt features suggest possible industrial activity in the area prior to the construction of the palisade ditch. Pottery from the site was Romano-British in date. According to the brief (CHET 2017) Bronze Age and Iron Age settlement remains were also found.

3.4.3 A further cropmark enclosure (HER 01490) is located to the immediate west of the cropmark complex. D-shaped enclosures (HER 09179 and HER 09180) are also recorded to the south of the Needham bypass. The morphology of the features suggests that they are prehistoric or Roman in date.

3.5 Saxon

3.5.1 St Ives has an entry in the Domesday Survey of 1086 when it is listed as a very large manor comprising 64 households and worth £20¹. Two unstratified Saxon brooches (HER 01489 and 11011) are recorded within a 1km radius of the proposed development site. Early Saxon settlement evidence was found near the site of the late Saxon Benedictine Priory on Market Hill, c.1.1km to the south of Harrison Drive.

3.6 Medieval

3.6.1 The historic medieval core of St Ives lies along the northern bank of the River Great Ouse, c.1km to the south-west of Harrison Drive. Geophysical survey has recorded medieval ridge and furrow agricultural features on the proposed development site (Magnitude Surveys 2017). To the east of Harrison Way (CB 15347) a similar survey recorded further ridge and furrow and a linear feature and possible enclosure which are also likely to be of agricultural origin. No medieval settlement evidence has yet been found close to the proposed development area and it is likely that the area was part

¹ <http://opendomesday.org/place/TL3171/st-ives/> [Accessed 30/06/2017]

of the agricultural hinterland of the market town.

3.7 Post-Medieval

3.7.1 The land around Harrison way is dominated by post-medieval industrial sites. The lakes to the south of the St Ives Business park are infilled sand and gravel quarry pits and to the north of Harrison Way was a brick and tile works (MCB 20714). A malt house (MCB20722) lay to the immediate north-west of the proposed development area and the site of a former stocks bridge is recorded at its northern tip (MCB 20707). The first edition OS map of 1888 shows the proposed development area as open agricultural fields².

² National Library of Scotland website: <http://maps.nls.uk/view/114489809> [Accessed 30/06/2017].

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Excavation and Sampling

4.1.1 A total of 225m of linear trenching was opened using a mechanical excavator. Trenches 1, 2 and 4 were repositioned or shortened slightly due to the presence of dense hedgerows and trees around the perimeter and a stream along the western boundary.

4.1.2 Ground reduction was carried out under archaeological supervision using an 8-ton tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m-wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed in spits down to the level of the undisturbed natural geological deposits where potential archaeological features could be observed and recorded. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by trowel and hoe as appropriate and all further excavation was undertaken manually using hand tools. Overburden deposits were set aside beside each trench and examined visually and with a metal-detector for finds retrieval.

4.1.3 Metal-detecting was carried out during the topsoil and subsoil stripping and throughout the excavation process. Archaeological features and spoilheaps were scanned by metal-detector as they were encountered/ created.

4.1.4 Field excavation techniques and recording methods are detailed in the PCA Fieldwork Induction Manual (Operations Manual I) by Joanna Taylor and Gary Brown (2009).

4.1.5 All features were investigated and recorded in order to properly understand the date and nature of the archaeological remains on the site and to recover sufficient finds assemblages to assess the chronological development and socio-economic character of the site over time.

4.2 Recording Methodology

4.2.1 The limits of excavations, heights above Ordnance Datum (m OD) and the locations of archaeological features and interventions were recorded using a Leica 1200 GPS rover unit with RTK differential correction, giving three-dimensional accuracy of 20mm or better.

- 4.2.2 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.
- 4.2.4 High-resolution digital photographs were taken at all stages of the evaluation process.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The trenches are described below in numerical order, with technical data tabulated. Archaeological features and deposits were sealed by the subsoil, unless otherwise stated. Features and deposits are described from west to east or north to south depending on the alignment of the trench.

5.2 Trench 1

5.2.1 Trench 1 contained a modern ditch [106], which truncated the topsoil. It was not investigated.

| TRENCH 1 | Figures 1-2 | | Plate 1 | |
|---|-------------|------------------------------------|-----------|--|
| Trench Alignment: E-W | Length: 40m | Level of Natural (m OD): 5.93-6.06 | | |
| Deposit | Context No. | Average Depth (m) | | |
| | | W End | E End | |
| Topsoil | (100) | 0.33 | 0.35 | |
| Subsoil | (101) | 0.33-0.42 | 0.35-0.45 | |
| Natural | (102) | 0.42+ | 0.45+ | |
| Summary | | | | |
| Trench 1 was located in the northern part of the development area; the trench contained one modern ditch. | | | | |

5.3 Trench 2

5.3.1 Trench 2 contained a modern ditch [108], which truncated the topsoil. It was not investigated.

| TRENCH 2 | Figures 1-2 | | Plate N/A | |
|-------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------|-----------|--|
| Trench Alignment: NE-SW | Length: 45m | Level of Natural (m OD): 5.81-5.88 | | |
| Deposit | Context No. | Average Depth (m) | | |
| | | NE End | SW End | |
| Topsoil | (100) | 0.14 | 0.30 | |
| Subsoil | (101) | 0.14-0.27 | 0.30-0.45 | |
| Natural | (102) | 0.27+ | 0.45+ | |
| Summary | | | | |

Trench 2 was located in the northern part of the development area to the south of Trench 1. The trench contained one modern ditch.

5.4 Trench 3

5.4.1 Trench 3 contained five furrows.

5.4.2 Furrow [104] was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave base (1.8m+ long x 1.9m wide x 0.23m deep). It contained a single fill (103) of mid greyish brown clayey sandy silt which contained no finds.

| TRENCH 3 | Figures 1-2 | | Plates 2-3 | |
|--|--------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Trench Alignment: NW-SE | Length: 50m | Level of Natural (m OD): 5.58-5.86 | | |
| Deposit | Context No. | Average Depth (m) | | |
| | | NW End | SE End | |
| Topsoil | (100) | 0.18 | 0.30 | |
| Subsoil | (101) | 0.18-0.27 | 0.30-0.50 | |
| Natural | (102) | 0.27+ | 0.50+ | |
| Summary | | | | |
| Trench 3 was located centrally within the development area. The trench contained five furrows. | | | | |

5.5 Trench 4

5.5.1 No archaeological features were present in Trench 4.

| TRENCH 4 | Figures 1-2 | | Plate N/A | |
|--|--------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|--|
| Trench Alignment: E-W | Length: 40m | Level of Natural (m OD): 5.67-5.75 | | |
| Deposit | Context No. | Average Depth (m) | | |
| | | E End | W End | |
| Topsoil | (100) | 0.23 | 0.12 | |
| Subsoil | (101) | 0.23-0.40 | 0.12-0.29 | |
| Natural | (102) | 0.40+ | 0.29+ | |
| Summary | | | | |
| Trench 4 was located centrally within the development area immediately to the south of Trench 3. The trench contained no features. | | | | |

5.6 Trench 5

5.6.1 Trench 5 contained one modern ditch [110], present on 19th century Ordnance Survey maps and 1940s aerial photographs, which was not excavated.

| TRENCH 5 | Figures 1-2 | Plates 4-5 | |
|--|--------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Trench Alignment: NW-SE | Length: 50m | Level of Natural (m OD): 5.56-5.82 | |
| Deposit | Context No. | Average Depth (m) | |
| | | NW End | SE End |
| Topsoil | (100) | 0.17 | 0.20 |
| Subsoil | (101) | 0.17-0.32 | 0.20-0.40 |
| Natural | (102) | 0.32+ | 0.40+ |
| Summary | | | |
| Trench 5 was located in the southern part of the development area immediately to the south of Trench 4. The trench contained one modern ditch. | | | |

6 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The evaluation identified undated furrows in Trench 3, in the centre of the site. Aligned northeast-southwest, these furrows can be seen in aerial photographs of the field on the eastern side of Harrison Way and were also picked up by the geophysical survey. The furrows are likely to be associated with medieval or post-medieval agricultural activity, although no finds were present.
- 6.2 Modern ditches were recorded in Trenches 1-2 and 5. The ditch in Trench 5 was a former field boundary present on 19th century Ordnance Survey maps and an aerial photograph shows the boundary still present in the 1940s.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 7.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Abbey Group for commissioning the work. The author would also like to thank Christiane Meckseper for managing the project, Tom Learmonth for his hard work on site and PCA's CAD department for preparing the figures.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

8.1 Printed Sources

Meckseper, C. 2017. Land West of Harrison Way, St Ives, Cambridgeshire: Written Scheme of Investigation (Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd., unpublished)

Stewart, G. 2017 Brief for Archaeological Evaluation. Land West of Harrison Way, St Ives (Cambridgeshire County Council, unpublished)

8.2 Websites

1) British Geological Survey (Date accessed 07/09/2017)

www.bgs.ac.uk



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

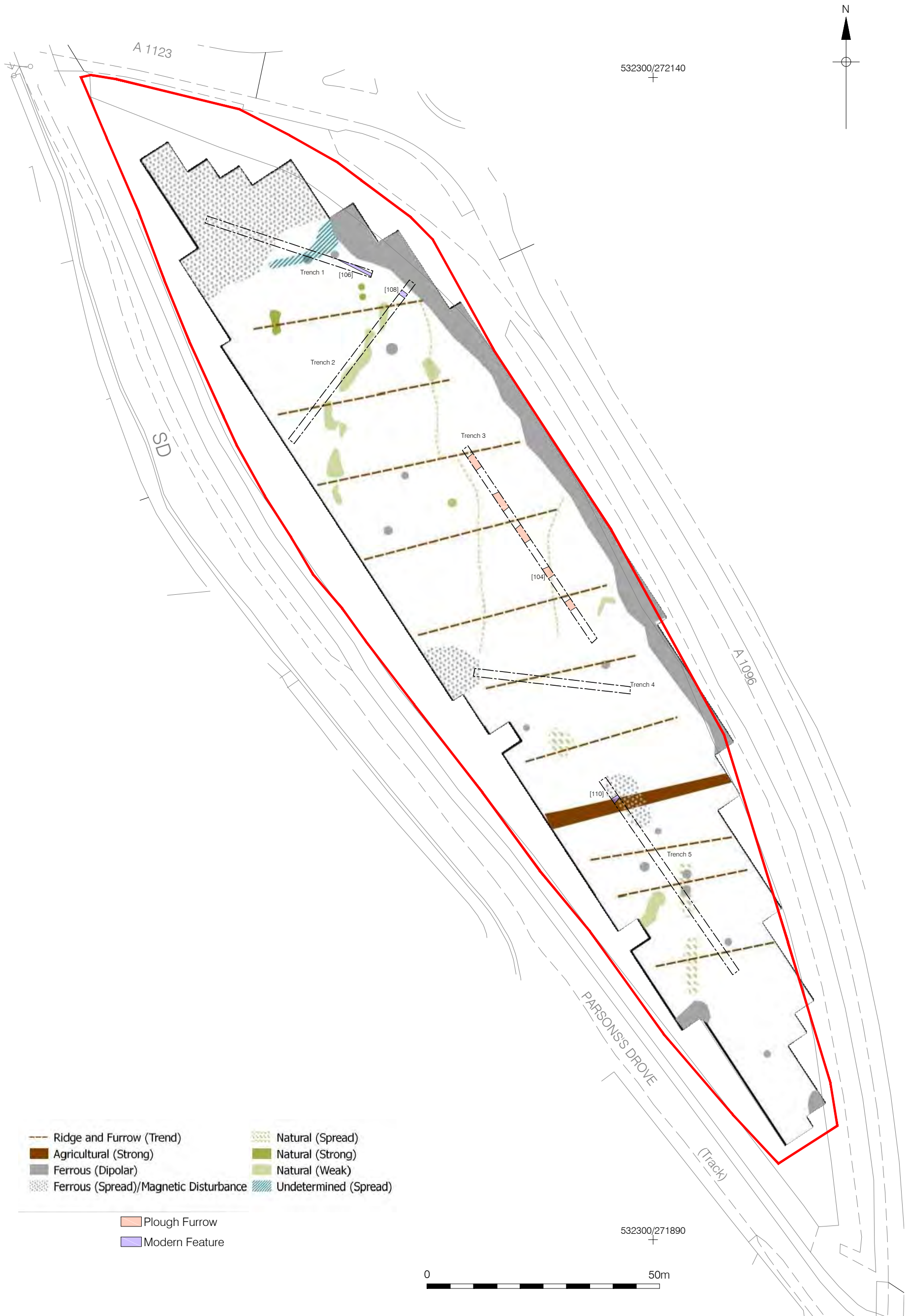


Figure 2
Detailed Site Location overlain on Geophysical Survey
1:625 at A3

9 APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: Trench 1 showing Ditch [106], view north-west



Plate 2: Trench 3, view north-west



Plate 3: Furrow [104], view north-east



Plate 4: Trench 5, view south-east



Plate 5: Modern ditch [110] in Trench 5, view north-east

10 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

| Context Number | Cut | Trench | Type | Category |
|----------------|-----|--------|-------|----------|
| 100 | 0 | 0 | Layer | Topsoil |
| 101 | 0 | 0 | Layer | Subsoil |
| 102 | 0 | 0 | Layer | Natural |
| 103 | 104 | 3 | Fill | Furrow |
| 104 | 104 | 3 | Cut | Furrow |
| 105 | 106 | 1 | Fill | Ditch |
| 106 | 106 | 1 | Cut | Ditch |
| 107 | 108 | 2 | Fill | Ditch |
| 108 | 108 | 2 | Cut | Ditch |
| 109 | 110 | 5 | Fill | Ditch |
| 110 | 110 | 5 | Cut | Ditch |

11 APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-295187

Project details

Project name Land West of Harrison Way, St Ives, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological 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 west of Harrison Way, St Ives, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 3225 7204) between the 5th and 6th September 2017. The archaeological work was commissioned by Abbey Group in advance of commercial development of the site. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the proposed development area. The evaluation identified undated furrows in Trench 3 and modern ditches in Trenches 1-2 and 5. The ditch in Trench 5 corresponded with a field boundary seen on 19th century mapping and aerial photographs from the 1940s.

Project dates Start: 05-09-2017 End: 06-09-2017

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes ECB5163 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Current Land use Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed

Monument type FURROW Uncertain

Monument type DITCH Modern

Significant Finds N/A None

Methods & techniques "Targeted Trenches"

Development type Rural commercial

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the planning process After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country England
Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE HUNTINGDONSHIRE SAINT IVES Land West of Harrison Way, St Ives, Cambridgeshire
Postcode PE27 5YB
Study area 1.1 Hectares
Site coordinates TL 3225 7204 52.330085671738 -0.058988548327 52 19 48 N 000 03 32 W Point

Project creators

Name of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.

Organisation

Project brief Gemma Stewart
originator

Project design Christiane Meckseper
originator

Project Christiane Meckseper
director/manager

Project supervisor Mary-Anne Slater

Project archives

Physical Archive No
Exists?

Digital Archive Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
recipient

Digital Archive ID ECB5163

Digital Contents "none"

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

Paper Archive Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
recipient

Paper Archive ID ECB5163

Paper Contents "none"

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

Project bibliography

1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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PCA

PCA CAMBRIDGE

THE GRANARY, RECTORY FARM
BREWERY ROAD, PAMPISFORD
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB22 3EN
t: 01223 845 522
e: cambridge@pre-construct.com

PCA DURHAM

UNIT 19A, TURSDALE BUSINESS PARK
TURSDALE
DURHAM DH6 5PG
t: 0191 377 1111
e: durham@pre-construct.com

PCA LONDON

UNIT 54, BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE
96 ENDWELL ROAD, BROCKLEY
LONDON SE4 2PD
t: 020 7732 3925
e: london@pre-construct.com

PCA NEWARK

OFFICE 8, ROEWOOD COURTYARD
WINKBURN, NEWARK
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NG22 8PG
t: 01636 370410
e: newark@pre-construct.com

PCA NORWICH

QUARRY WORKS, DEREHAM ROAD
HONINGHAM
NORWICH NR9 5AP
T: 01223 845522
e: cambridge@pre-construct.com

PCA WARWICK

UNIT 9, THE MILL, MILL LANE
LITTLE SHREWLEY, WARWICK
WARWICKSHIRE CV35 7HN
t: 01926 485490
e: warwick@pre-construct.com

PCA WINCHESTER

5 RED DEER COURT, ELM ROAD
WINCHESTER
HAMPSHIRE SO22 5LX
t: 01962 849 549
e: winchester@pre-construct.com

