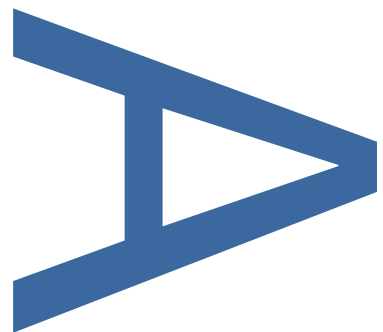
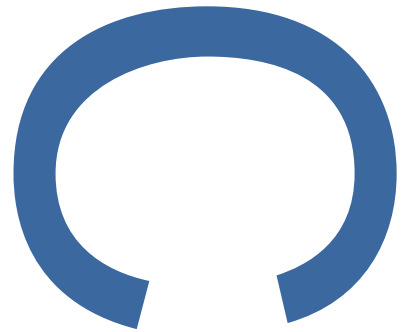


**LAND EAST OF HIGHFIELDS ROAD,
HIGHFIELDS, CALDECOTE,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE:**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING



PCA REPORT NO: R13015

SITE CODE: ECB5208

SEPTEMBER 2017

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

Land East of Highfields Road, Highfields Caldecote, Cambridgeshire: Archaeological Monitoring

Local Planning Authority: South Cambridgeshire District Council

Planning References: S/2510/15/OL
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Central National Grid Reference: TL 3561 5908 (c)

Site Code: ECB5208

Report No. R13015

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ABSTRACT

This report describes the results of archaeological monitoring carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on land east of Highfields Road, Highfields Caldecote, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 3561 5908) on the 5th and 6th September 2017. The archaeological work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting. The aim of the work was to archaeologically monitor the excavation of fourteen geotechnical test trenches and eight boreholes prior to the development of the site.

No features of archaeological interest were observed within these excavations.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A programme of archaeological monitoring was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on Land East of Highfields Road, Highfields Caldecote, Cambridgeshire, CB23 7ZA (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 3561 5908) on 5th and 6th September 2017 (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting following granting of planning permission for the construction of a proposed development for residential dwellings with associated access and landscaping within an overall total development area of c.7ha (Planning Reference S/2510/15/OL). The plot consists of an area of open grassland bounded to the west by Highfields Road, to the south by properties fronting Clare Drive and fields and fields to the north and east.
- 1.3 The work was subject to a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological monitoring and conforms to the Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET) Requirements for Archaeological Work.
- 1.4 The objective of the work was to monitor and observe all aspects of groundwork for the geotechnical test trenches and boreholes which have the potential to adversely impact upon archaeological remains.
- 1.5 This report describes the results of the monitoring and aims to add relevant information to the archaeological record. The site archive will be deposited at Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store.
- 1.6 The aim of the archaeological monitoring of the test pitting was to identify, excavate and record any archaeological remains revealed during the geotechnical work in order to mitigate their impact, and to potentially provide further information on archaeological remains previously recorded in the trial trench evaluation of the site (MoLA 2016).

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Geology

2.1.1 The area is underlain by Gault Formation - Mudstone, sedimentary bedrock which formed approximately 101-113 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period in a local environment previously dominated by shallow seas. This is overlain by superficial deposits of Oadby Member diamicton, sedimentary deposits formed in the Quaternary period up to 2 million years ago from ice action and meltwater associated with glacial and inter-glacial periods. (BGS 2017).

2.2 Topography

2.2.1 The site is approximately level at c.71m AOD. Topographic survey records a level within the centre of the northern field of 71.97m AOD and a level of level of 70.641m AOD at the south-western corner of the site. In the centre west of the site, a bank separates the access road from the northern field. The bank is approximately 1m high.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 General

3.1.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment was prepared by CgMs Consulting (2015), geophysical survey was undertaken by GSB (2015) and trial trenching evaluation was carried out in December 2015 by Museum of London Archaeology (MoLA) to support the planning application. Numbers in brackets refer to the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) asset numbering.

3.2 Prehistoric

3.2.1 There are no finds of Palaeolithic or Mesolithic date within the study area recorded on the HER. Excavations at Highfields Caldecote immediately to the south-west of the site found two residual Mesolithic tools, a blade and a tranchet axe (Kenny 2007). The HER records no Neolithic or Bronze Age finds or features and evaluation of adjacent land to the south-west did not identify any Neolithic or Bronze Age evidence.

3.3 Iron Age and Roman

3.3.1 Excavations immediately to the south-west of the site recovered evidence of a late Iron Age banjo enclosure. A Roman farmstead is recorded close to the enclosure consisting of a large ditch forming part of an enclosure with other linear features within it. To the south of the enclosure, a series of parallel ditches are also recorded, bounded to the west by a perpendicular ditch, which may date from the Iron Age. It has been suggested this represents a vineyard (11913, CB14750; Kenney, 2007; Kenney, 2011)

3.3.2 Further evaluation at Caldecote Primary School, c.750m south-west of the site found a series of Iron Age pits and a ditch of Iron Age or Roman date on a similar alignment to those found to the south (13008; Abrams, 2000). Evaluation to the south of Caldecote Primary School, c.850m south-west of the study site, revealed a pit and a linear ditch of Iron Age date along with a Roman field system, which appeared to be in use over a considerable period of time (119143).

3.3.3 At Childerley Gate, c.800m north-east of the site, a Roman farmstead was

identified. This comprised a 2nd century ladder field system of narrow rectilinear fields linked by a trackway to two larger enclosures. In the south-western enclosure an inhumation was recorded and a pottery dump in one of the ditches.

- 3.3.4 At Childerley Chapel, c.800m north-west, an early/mid Roman field system was recorded, comprising field boundaries. Later field boundaries were established on a different alignment, along with a roughly semi-circular building (MCB17870; Albion Archaeology 2008).

3.4 Saxon/Early Medieval/Medieval

- 3.4.1 There is no evidence in the HER relating to the Anglo-Saxon/early medieval period. At the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086, Caldecote had a population of 15 (Domesday online). This was the main village of Caldecote which lies c.2.5km south of Highfields Caldecote. Its population increased during the 13th and 14th centuries, and then declined in the 15th century (VCH 1973).

- 3.4.2 The parish was heavily agricultural, reflected in the HER entries which are exclusively for ridge and furrow, identified initially through aerial photography (ECB1613).

3.5 Post-Medieval

- 3.5.1 The site has remained undeveloped for its documented history.

3.6 Geophysical Survey and Trial Trenching

- 3.6.1 The geophysical survey of the study site identified a number of potential archaeological anomalies in the north of site comprising a possible rectilinear enclosure, a possible second enclosure and a series of ditches.

- 3.6.2 Twenty-one trenches were excavated during a programme of trial trenching evaluation of the site (MoLA 2015). The trial trenches targeted the anomalies identified during the geophysical survey as well as 'blank' areas of the site. The trial trenching confirmed that the focus of archaeological activity was located in the northern part of the site in line with the results of the geophysical survey.

3.6.3 The pottery assemblage indicates that this area of the site was occupied between the 1st century BC and the early 1st century AD (MoLA 2015). The archaeological features identified in the rest of the site comprised evidence of former agricultural activity dating from the Medieval/Post-Medieval period.

3.7 Methodology and Results

3.7.1 The archaeological monitoring observed the machine excavation of 14 geotechnical test pits located across the central and southern portions of the site. Each of the test pits were on average 3m long, 1m wide and up to 3m deep. Some test pits varied slightly from the linear dimensions dependent on natural subsurface obstructions such as large flint nodules.

3.7.2 No features or finds of archaeological interest were observed in the majority of the test trenches. A single small unstratified flint was recovered from the spoil of a test trench at the northern end of the site. On investigation this was found to be a natural thermal flaked potlid spall of no discernible archaeological provenance. The soil stratigraphy from the section of the northern trench consisted of 0.40m of mid brown clay-silt topsoil over approximately 2.60m depth of grey brown silt-clay to formation containing frequent stones and flint nodules. This soil makeup was similar for the trenches across the rest of the site.

3.7.3 Monitoring also observed the drilling of eight boreholes located across the site, each 0.20m in diameter and up to 4m in depth. Other than observing the soil cores from the boreholes, no information of archaeological interest was recorded from the drilling.

3.7.4 High-resolution digital photographs were taken at all stages of the monitoring process.

4 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The archaeological monitoring at land to the east of Highfields Road, Highfield Caldecote identified no evidence of archaeological features or finds within the observed excavation of geotechnical test holes and drilled boreholes. The single flint found in an unstratified deposit was a natural thermal spall.
- 4.1.2 Previous evaluation of the site had shown that archaeological features were limited to the northern corner of the development site. This was confirmed to a limited extent by this watching brief which recorded no archaeological finds or features. Test trenches 3 and 4 and Borehole 1 located at the northern end of the site were probably too small to locate archaeological remains and/or were located in areas in-between features.

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 5.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work. The project was managed by Mark Hinman. Flint identification was carried out by Barry Bishop and the Fieldwork was carried out by Dave Curry, both of Pre-Construct Archaeology.

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Domesday Book Online:

<http://www.domesdaybook.co.uk/cambridge7.html> [accessed 08/09/2017]

Figure 1: Site location

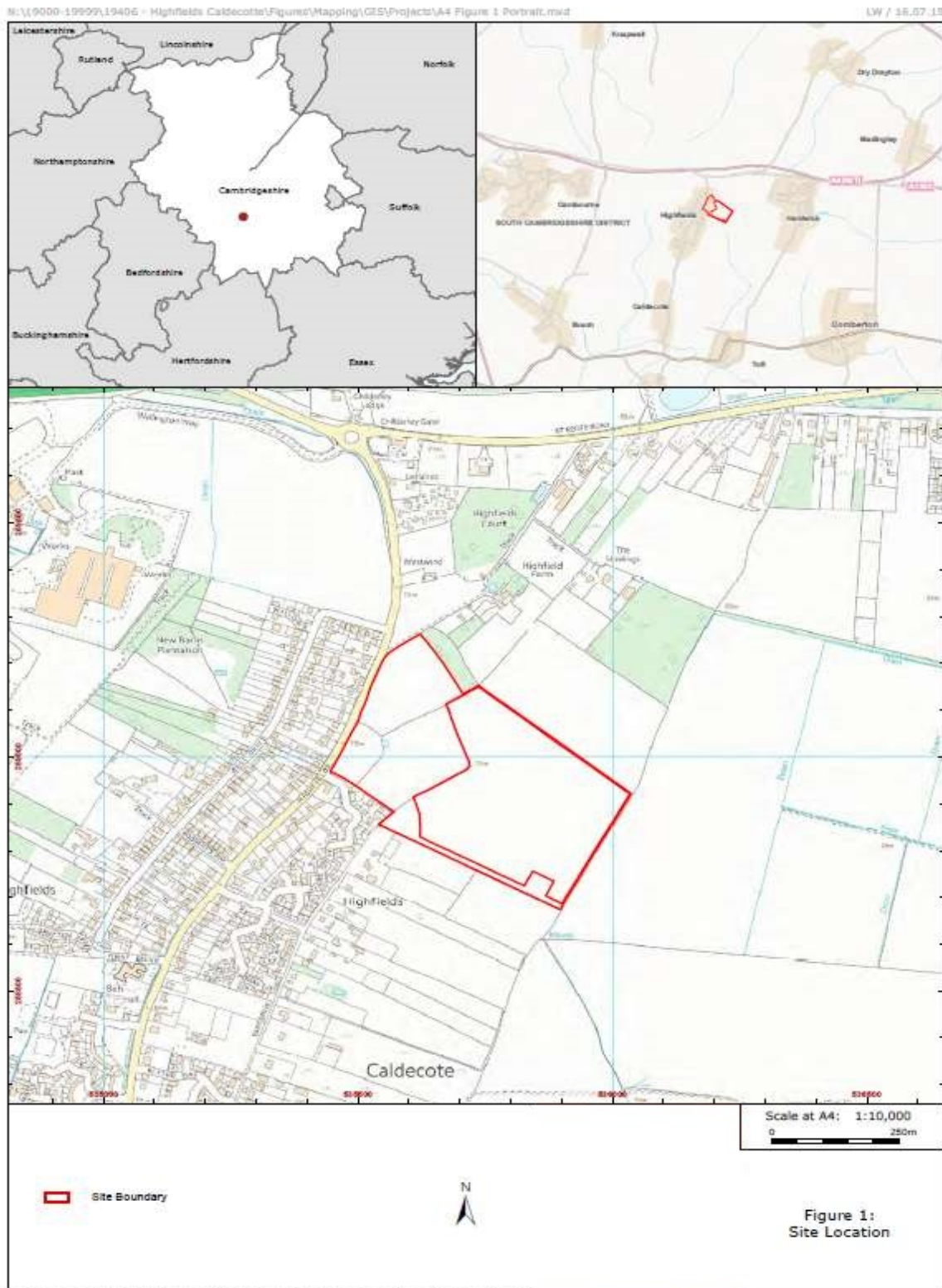
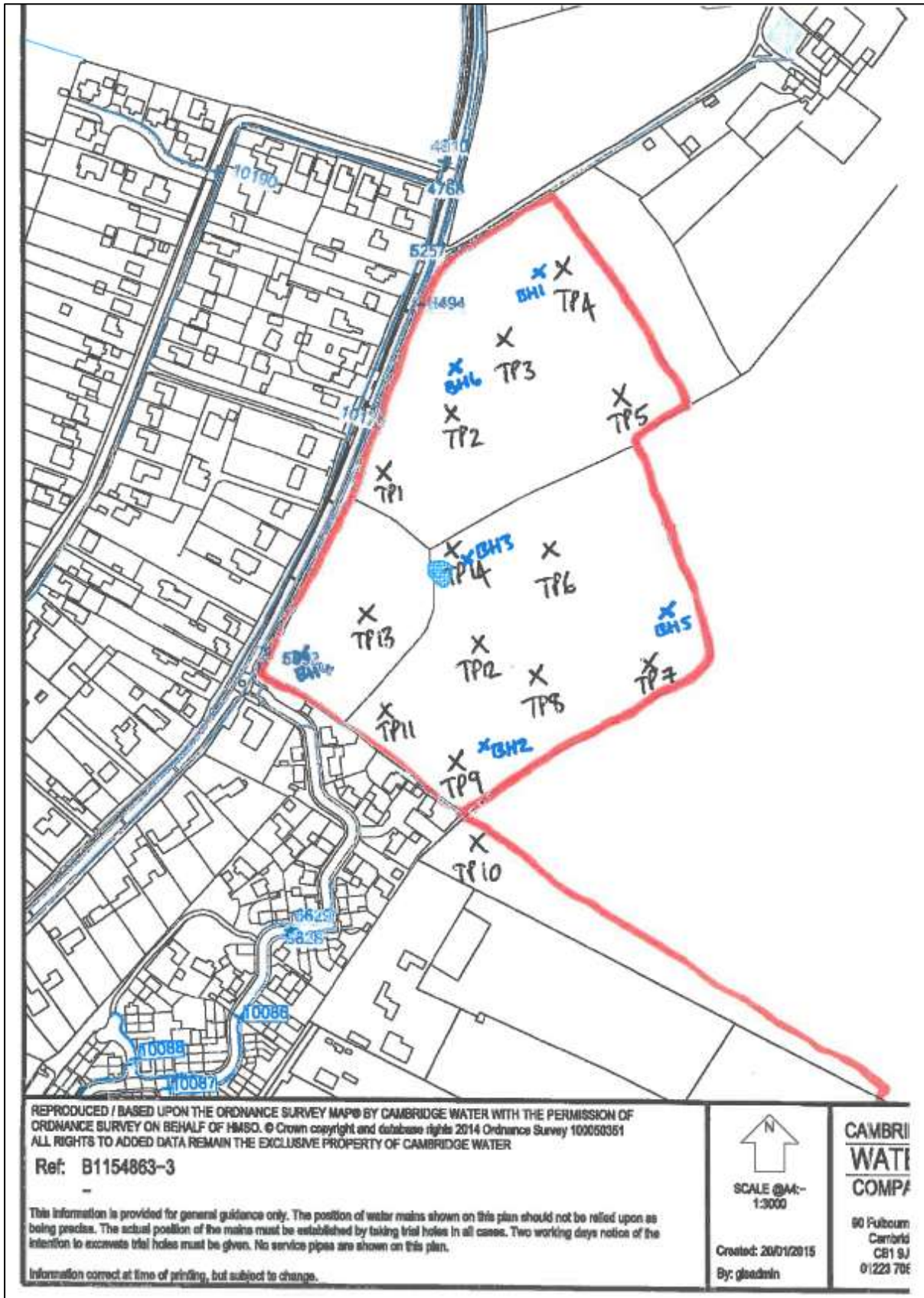


Figure 2: Final location of trial trenches and boreholes



7 APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: Topography of site, facing south-west



Plate 2: Machine excavation of trial trench, facing south



Plate 3: Machine excavation of trial trench, facing north-west



Plate 4: Operation of borehole drill, facing north-west



Plate 5: Example of excavated geotechnical trial trench, facing north

8 APPENDIX 2: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-295911

Project details

Project name Archaeological Monitoring of Land East of Highfields, Caldecote, Cambs.

Short description of the project A programme of archaeological monitoring of geotechnical test pits and boreholes on land to the east of Highfields, Caldecote, Cambridgeshire. No features or finds of archaeological significance were observed during the groundworks.

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

Previous/future work Yes / Not known

Any associated project codes S/2510/15/OL - Planning Application No. reference

Any associated project codes ECB5208 - HER event no. reference

Type of project Recording project

Current Land use Cultivated Land 2 - Operations to a depth less than 0.25m

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Project location

Country England

Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE CALDECOTE
Land east of Highfields, Caldecote

Study area 5.8 Hectares

Site coordinates TL 3561 5908 52.212806465309 -0.014917065429 52 12 46 N 000
00 53 W Point

Project creators

Name of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

Organisation

Project brief Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice
originator

Project design PCA Central
originator

Project Christiane Meckseper
director/manager

Project supervisor Dave Curry

Project archives

Physical Archive No
Exists?

Digital Archive Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Archive Facility
recipient

Digital Media "Images raster / digital photography"
available

Paper Archive Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Archive Facility
recipient

Paper Media "Photograph","Report","Section","Unpublished Text"
available

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