

**7 HIGH STREET, BALSHAM,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB21 4DJ**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL
TRENCH EVALUATION**

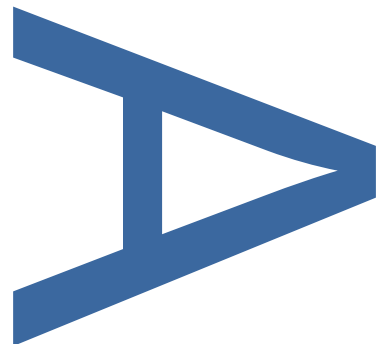
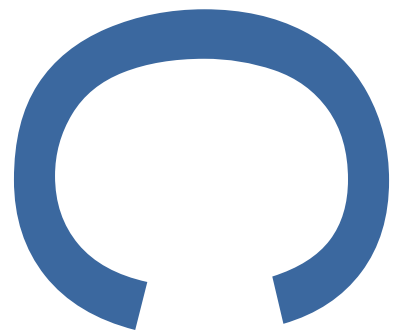
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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBERS:
S/1959/16/FL**

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SITE CODE: ECB5129

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LAND AT 7 HIGH STREET, BALSHAM,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH
EVALUATION

Quality Control

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Project Number	K5013
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Land at 7 High Street Balsham, Cambridgeshire: Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

Local Planning Authority: South Cambridgeshire

Planning Reference: S/1959/16/FL

Central National Grid Reference: TL 5881 5060

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Report No. R13020

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS	2
ABSTRACT	3
1 INTRODUCTION	4
2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	5
3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	6
4 METHODOLOGY	10
5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE	12
6 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE	21
7 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS	39
8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	42
9 BIBLIOGRAPHY	43
10 APPENDIX 1: PLATES	53
11 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX	68
12 APPENDIX 3: WORKED FLINT	70
13 APPENDIX 4: PREHISTORIC POTTERY	71
14 APPENDIX 5: ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESIDUES	72
15 APPENDIX 6: OASIS FORM	73
FIGURE 1 SITE LOCATION	46
FIGURE 1 DETAILED SITE LOCATION	47
FIGURE 3 TRENCH 2	48
FIGURE 4 TRENCH 3	49
FIGURE 5 TRENCH 4	50
FIGURE 6 REPRESENTATIVE SECTION LOCATIONS	51
FIGURE 7 REPRESENTATIVE SECTIONS	52

ABSTRACT

This report describes the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on land at 7 High Street, Balsham Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 5881 5060) from the 31st August to the 4th September 2017. The archaeological work was commissioned by Joseph Mulhare of Hill Residential in response to a planning condition attached to the construction of a new residential development with associated access and facilities. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the proposed development area.

Features of Earlier Iron Age date, including post-holes and small ditches were identified within Trench 2, 3 and at the eastern end of Trench 4. These were likely to be linked with a small settlement, possibly a farmstead and appeared to be broadly contemporary with the settlement evidence recorded on the CHER to the south-east at Hay Close, Balsham (MCB17783).

Several structures, including walls and drains of 19th -century and 20th -century date were recorded in Trench 4, adjacent to Balsham High Street. A building constructed of 'Cambridge' yellow brick appeared to have replaced a red-brick building dated from 1825 to 1925 with an associated chalk-block lined drain. There were no surviving traces of a smithy which was thought to have existed at the north end of the site, or of associated metal-working.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land at 7 High Street, Balsham, Cambridgeshire, CB21 4DJ (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 5881 5060) from the 31st August to the 4th September 2017 (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by Joseph Mulhare of Hill Residential in response to an archaeological planning condition attached to a new residential development within an overall total development area of 0.8ha (Planning Reference S/1959/16/FL). The plot consists of an area of former factory buildings operated by the steel manufacturing firm Balsham Buildings. 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 (Gemma Stewart 08/05/2017) 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 Four trial trenches, each measuring 50m x 1.80m were located in the footprints of the new buildings in order to sample excavate the site, and target specific areas which were to be potentially impacted.
- 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 Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation and Seaford Chalk Formation (undifferentiated) - Chalk, a sedimentary bedrock which formed approximately 84 to 94 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period in a local environment previously dominated by warm chalk seas. This is overlain by Lowestoft Formation - Diamicton. superficial deposits which formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period in a local environment previously dominated by ice age conditions. (BGS 2017)

2.2 Topography

2.3 The site was formerly the home of a steel manufacturer and has almost certainly suffered from artificial levelling as part of the factory construction.

2.4 There are several unnamed watercourses which flow through in a south-east to north-west direction, to the north of Balsham. The site lies close to the 110m contour, the topography being relatively flat across the village.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 General

3.1.1 The following archaeological background is taken from the Archaeological Brief (Stewart 2017) and an area search of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record.

3.2 Prehistoric

3.2.1 The site is located on slightly rising land to the south of the county of Cambridgeshire at approximately 110 AOD.

3.2.2 The earliest activity recorded within the study area comprises Bronze Age remains. That this proposed development is situated away from any major rivers, and particularly the Ouse River valley to the north-west, has meant that there is less early prehistoric (periods such as the Palaeolithic Mesolithic) activity in the area. River valleys being highly favoured in the early periods for the resources they offered.

3.2.3 An evaluation recorded to the south, at Hay Close, Balsham (MCB17783) identified a small complex of pits cut by a shallow ditch/gully of Iron Age date. The subsequent open area excavation, identified further pits of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age date which contained domestic debris. Fieldwork here was recorded as ECB2374.

3.2.4 Beyond the study area, undated recorded cropmarks of ring ditches and enclosures are also likely to be of prehistoric date (MCB11152, MCB11153).

3.3 Roman

3.3.1 Roman occupation and activity around Cambridgeshire was on a considerable scale. The substantial Roman town of Dvroliponte (later known as Cambridge), centred around Castle Hill, lies c. 10 miles to the north-west of the site. Closer, c. 6 miles to the south-west, Great Chesterford is also another important Roman-era settlement.

3.3.2 Balsham lay approximately 2km north of the section of the Roman road between Cambridge and Haverhill known locally as the Via Devana (Historic

Environment Record reference MCB9602). Beyond the study area a further Roman settlement has been recorded at MCB11151.

3.3.3 Despite the strong Roman presence in what would become South Cambridgeshire, there are no Roman era features, sites or monuments recorded on the CHER within the study area.

3.3.4 Roman pottery has been found in the vicinity of Balsham suggestive of background Roman period activity. For example 17 sherds of unglazed greyware pottery, including 4 Roman rims, were found within the topsoil taken from a building development to Weston Colville. (CHER11774). Further pottery was also unearthed at CHER11784, MCB17834.

3.4 Saxon

3.4.1 Very little of Anglo-Saxon date has been found around Balsham, and within the study area, although it is known that beyond Balsham to the north-west is Fleam Dyke (DCB359), a large ditch of Anglo-Saxon date.

3.4.2 One of the few recorded entries of this period is the Incomplete late Anglo-Saxon carved grave slab has been unearthed within Balsham and recorded at 06332a. It probably dates to the 11th-century and currently lies against the wall at the west end of the south aisle of the church in Balsham.

3.4.3 The settlement of Balsham was recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086. There are four separate entries, although the main record indicates that the settlement had a taxable value of 9 geld units. Value to lord in 1066 was £12, in 1086 £17. Value to lord c. 1070 £10. There were 12 villagers. 12 smallholders and 2 slaves recorded in the settlement. There was 19 ploughlands and 5 lord's plough teams and 12 men's plough teams are recorded. Resources included Meadow 12 acres with Woodland and 200 pigs. There was also one mill. The overlordship remained in the hands of The Abbey of Ely (St Etheldreda) from 1066 to 1086.

3.5 Medieval

3.5.1 There is a considerable amount of activity of medieval date around the

village of Balsham reflective of its relative prosperity during that era.

- 3.5.2 Medieval activity in the area is focused around Church of Holy Trinity, Balsham (DCB5670), the main structure of which, including the west tower is of 13th-century date. The chancel dates to the early 14th-century and the nave and north and south aisles date to the late 14th-century. The church was restored 1875. It was possibly built by Hugh De Balsham who was the Bishop of Ely between 1257 and 1286.
- 3.5.3 A possible moated site, which survives as an earthwork has been recorded at Plumian Farm, Balsham CHER 01202. A further surviving earthwork of medieval date is recorded at CHER 01203. It is possible that each of the earthworks would once have been connected with a mill, although today there is no trace of such a building.
- 3.5.4 The original manor of Oxcroft, West Wrattling, mentioned in Domesday has been recorded as CHER 06308, based on documentary evidence, and a medieval ditch found at Oxcroft Farm, was allocated CHER CB14629. A section has been excavated through the ditch.
- 3.5.5 Balsham manor house, first recorded in 1356, when it was described as ruinous, is traditionally said to have been located on the site of the present Nine Chimneys House. Documentary evidence has been used to create the entry CHER 10835.
- 3.5.6 Amongst remains of prehistoric date, a further medieval ditch was unearthed at Hay Close, Balsham, to the south-east of the present site. MCB17783.
- 3.5.7 Medieval pottery has been found at several locations across the village, for example early medieval grey-ware has been unearthed at CHER 06266, and further sherds of medieval pottery found at CHER 10995, CHER 11774 and CHER 11784.
- 3.5.8 A medieval iron arrowhead was recorded as a spot-find at CHER 06298.
- 3.5.9 Aside from the references in Domesday Book, archaeological investigations

have provided some information about the medieval origins of the village of Balsham. Several possible house platforms, belonging to medieval houses have been observed as earthworks. CHER 10837.

- 3.5.10 Further earthworks, including a hollow way running N-S across the field south of Plumian Farm, have been recorded around Balsham village. It is thought that other surface irregularities at the same location may be indicative of further archaeological features. CHER 10839

3.6 Post-medieval

- 3.6.1 There is only one post-medieval entry on the CHER within the study area which is not a historic standing building.

- 3.6.2 At Oxcroft Farm at West Wrating A recording brief in 1995 indicated that the brick dovecote dated to the 18th-century. The project proved that this had then been converted to a dwelling at some time during the 19th-century. (CHER 10464).

- 3.6.3 The Post-medieval activity largely takes the form of listed and historic buildings which are distributed around the historic core of the village. Only two of the most relevant shall be mentioned here. The remainder of the listed buildings are some distance from the site, to the west and east, and are less relevant to the current work.

- 3.6.4 Across the road from 7 High Street at 1, 3 and 5 West Wrating Road there is a Grade II listed Cottage, subdivided into three properties and extended. The earliest parts of these timber framed structures dates to the Late 17th-century. Adjacent to it, the Cedars was a further historic cottage built in 1840.

3.7 Undated and Multi-period

- 3.7.1 There are no large multi-period sites recorded on the CHER

- 3.7.2 The development site has not previously been evaluated.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Excavation and Sampling

- 4.1.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation for the evaluation proposed the excavation of four trial trenches, positioned to target the building footprints wherever possible (Figure 2).
- 4.1.2 Ground reduction was carried out under archaeological supervision using a 14-ton tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m-wide toothless ditching bucket. Layers of crush, made ground and a diesel contaminated soil were removed in spits down to the level of the undisturbed natural geological deposits where potential archaeological features could be observed and recorded.
- 4.1.3 The made-ground contained previously identified asbestos so that extra health and safety procedures including the wearing of one-use overalls and masks were put in place during the machining process. Following the machining to the natural horizon, below the asbestos contamination, trench edges and spoil were regularly sprayed to mitigate any further risk.
- 4.1.4 An Asbestos watching brief, which included the removal of visible asbestos for future testing, was undertaken by J England Environmental Services Ltd, on the 31st of August and 1st September. J England Environmental Services Ltd undertook the spraying of the trench edges and spoil and safe removal of possible asbestos contaminated waste.
- 4.1.5 Exposed archaeology was cleaned by trowel and hoe as appropriate and all further excavation was undertaken manually using hand tools. Contaminated trench edges were not cleaned due to the risk that would present.
- 4.1.6 Metal detecting of contaminated ground was not undertaken. Metal detecting was undertaken of uncontaminated ground and the archaeological features. There were no finds found whilst metal detecting.
- 4.1.7 Artefact Characterisation was not undertaken due to health and safety

considerations.

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

4.2 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 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].

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

4.2.4 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 site (CIFA 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.

5.2 Trench 1

5.2.1 The trench contained no archaeologically significant features or deposits.

TRENCH 1	Figure 2	Plate 2	
Trench Alignment: E-W	Length: 50m	Recorded Ground level 113.00m OD: Maximum Depth 1.10m	
Deposit	Context No.	Average Depth (m)	
		E End	W End
Recent 'crush'	(44)	0.25m	0.25m
Made-ground	(45)	0.25m	0.25m
Contaminated 'diesel-soil'	(46)	0.50m	0.50m
Mixed clay	(47)	0.10m	0.10m
Natural clay (max machined depth)	(48)	Unknown	Unknown
Summary			
Trench 1 was located at the southern end of the site.			
Trench 1 contained no archaeologically significant features or deposits.			

5.3 Trench 2

5.3.1 Archaeological features were present within Trench 2 and shall be discussed from north-west to south-east. All six archaeological features were sealed by layer (46), and cut the mixed clay (47).

5.3.2 Post-hole [33], located at the north-west end of the trench had a circular shape in plan. It had a diameter of 0.15m and a depth of 0.11m. The sides were steep and regular and the base approximately flat. The single fill (34) was a firm dark greyish-brown silty clay which was likely to be the result of deliberate dumping following the removal of any original post. The fill contained no dating evidence.

5.3.3 A further post-hole [35] was located close by. It also had a circular shape in plan. The diameter measured 0.17m and the depth 0.09. The sides and base

were concave. The single fill (36) was a firm dark greyish-brown silty clay which was likely to have been dumped into the feature following the removal of any original post. The fill contained no dating evidence. Based on a similarity of form and proximity it is likely that post-holes [33] and [35] were associated.

5.3.4 Several metres to the south-east there was a medium sized pit [1]. The pit extended partly beyond the southern edge of the trench, but appeared to have an approximately circular or oval shape in plan. The pit measured 0.70m wide east to west by at least 0.63m north to south. The sides were generally steep and regular, and locally slightly concave. The base was slightly sloping downwards to the west. There were two fills within the pit, the lower (2) and the upper (49). Fill (2) consisted of a firm darkish-grey silty clay which was relatively finds-rich and appeared to have been deliberately deposited within the pit to a depth of 0.25m. On the top of this backfilling episode, a semi-complete Early Iron Age vessel had been carefully deposited, along with two animal bones and a large glacial erratic stone. They were found in-situ and represented a deliberate and possibly ritual deposition. Upon removal, many fractures within the pot caused it to break into a series of sherds. In total 63 sherds of Early Iron Age (538g) were recovered from fill (2), along with a struck flint, the 'sharp' condition of which indicated that it had come from close proximity. Two small glacial erratic stones were also found within (2) which appeared to have been used as part of 'pot-boiler' activity. The upper fill (49) was devoid of finds and its make-up as a light yellowish-brown silty clay, radically different from the initial fill (2) suggests that it was the result of natural infilling. Two environmental samples (<1> and <3>) taken from the approximate fill of the semi-complete Early Iron Age vessel, and one from fill (2) within the wider pit produced very similar results indicative of general domestic waste, which included wood charcoal and small broken mollusc shells. They did confirm that there was no cremated bone present and were deemed to have poor surviving plant-macrofossils.

5.3.5 A small ditch [37] was located towards the centre of Trench 2. It was

orientated approximately north-east to south-west and extended beyond the limits of the trench in each direction with an observed length of at least 3.0m. The ditch notably did not appear within Trench 3 to the north, although its orientation suggested it may have. Ditch [37] had slightly concave sides and an approximately flat base. It was 0.37m wide and 0.10m deep. The fill (38) was a firm brownish-grey silty clay. Nineteen sherds of Early Iron Age pottery (96g) were recovered from the ditch. An environmental sample <2> taken from the ditch contained less plant-macrofossils than had been recovered from samples <1> and <3>, but did contain several remains of *Vallonia* sp. The good dating evidence indicated that the feature was of the same phase of activity as pit [1]. Two struck flints were also recovered from fill (38), one of which had been burnt, and may have been linked with 'pot-boiler' type activity, which was common place in the later Bronze Age into Iron Age periods.

5.3.6 A further similarly aligned, but shallower ditch [39] was observed to the south-east. It extended on a northeast to southwest orientation and had a visible extent of at least 3.0m. The feature was 0.39m wide and had a surviving depth of only 0.03m. The sides, though shallow, were steep and concave. The fill (40) was a loose greyish brown silty clay. There were no finds recovered, but the orientation of the feature suggested that it was also likely to be of the same phase of activity as ditch [37].

5.3.7 At the south-eastern end of the trench there was a deep and regular possible post-hole [41], although the appearance of the feature could also suggest that it was the remains of a bore-hole. The presence of a base to the feature possibly discounted this. The feature was circular had a diameter of 0.20m with vertical sides and a flat base. The fill (42) consisted of a loose greyish-brown silty clay. It was undated.

TRENCH 2	Figure 3	Plate 3-7	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 50m	Recorded Ground level 113.26m OD: Maximum Depth 1.00m	
Deposit	Context No.	Average Depth (m)	
		NW End	SE End

Recent 'crush'	(44)	0.25m	0.30m
Made-ground	(45)	0.25m	-
Contaminated 'diesel-soil'	(46)	0.40m	0.50m
Mixed clay	(47)	0.10m	0.20m
Natural clay (max machined depth)	(48)	Unknown	Unknown
Summary			
Trench 2 was located in the centre-south of the site.			
The trench contained six archaeological features, [33], [35], [1], [37], [39], [41]			

5.4 Trench 3

5.4.1 Archaeological features were present within Trench 3 and shall be discussed from north-east to south-west. All seven archaeological features were sealed by layer (46), and cut the mixed clay (47).

5.4.2 A small post-hole [22] was located towards the north-eastern end of Trench 3. Post-hole [22] had a circular shape in plan, a recorded diameter of 0.41m and a depth was 0.38m. The sides and base were concave. The single fill (23) was a firm dark grey slightly sandy and silty clay which included occasional small stones. The fill (23) was likely to be the result of deliberate dumping, following the removal of any original post, as seen elsewhere on the site. Although undated, the proximity and appearance of post-hole [22] to [20] suggested they were of the same phase of activity.

5.4.3 Post-hole [20] was located a short distance to the south-west. It appeared to have a circular shape in plan and extended beyond the southern limit of excavation. It appeared to have a diameter of 0.22m and was 0.26m deep. The sides were steep and the base concave. A single fill (21) was composed of a firm mid to dark grey slightly silty clay, likely to be the result of deliberate dumping, following the removal of any original post. Finds included two sherds of Early Iron Age pottery (59g).

5.4.4 Post-hole [24] (or possibly small pit) was located towards the centre of the trench. It had a circular shape in plan and a diameter of 0.45m. The sides and base were concave. The single fill (25) was formed of a firm 'dirty' pale brown clay which probably formed through natural silting. The feature was

undated and had a different appearance to many of the other Early Iron Age post-holes, perhaps indicating it represented a different phase of activity. A very shallow natural 'scoop' was examined but not recorded to the east of post-hole [24].

- 5.4.5 A small squared-oval pit [26] was located closer to the centre of Trench 3. It measured 0.60m by 0.80m and had a depth of 0.15m. The sides and base were concave. The single fill (27) consisted of a firm 'dirty' pale clay which may have formed through natural silting. There were no finds recovered from the feature. This pit did not resemble the well-dated Early Iron Age features present in Trench 2, and may have belonged to a different phase of activity.
- 5.4.6 Ditch [28] ran parallel to [30] and was located to the south-west. Each ditch [28] and [30] had a north-west to south-east orientation. Although wider than ditch [30], ditch [28] had a shallower profile. It extended across the trench in each direction and was at least 3.0m in length. It was 0.35m wide and had a depth of 0.20m. It had a steeper northeast side and a shallow south-west side with a concave base. The fill (29) consisted of a firm dark grey slightly sandy and silty clay with no major inclusions and was likely to be the result of deliberate dumping. Four sherds of Early Iron Age pottery (12g) were recovered from fill (29).
- 5.4.7 Ditch [30] was located close to the south-western end of the trench. It extended across the trench in each direction and was at least 3.0m in length. It ran parallel to a further small ditch [28] located immediately to the east. The ditch had regular, slightly convex and steep sides and a concave base. The north-eastern edge of the ditch was slightly steeper. A single fill (31) consisted of a firm dark grey slightly sandy and silty clay which contained no major inclusions. The fill was likely to be the result of deliberate dumping and strongly resembled fill (29) though it did not produce any finds.
- 5.4.8 Post-hole [32], located at the south-western end of the trench, had a diameter of 0.40m and a depth of 0.31m. The sides were steep and regular

and the base almost flat. The fill (43) consisted of a firm mottled dark grey and light grey slightly sandy and silty clay and was likely to be the result of deliberate dumping, following the removal of any original post. The post-hole was undated.

TRENCH 3	Figure 4	Plate 8-14	
Trench Alignment: SW-NE	Length: 50m	Recorded Ground level 113.44m OD at SW end to 113.07m OD at the NE end Maximum Depth 1.00m	
Deposit	Context No.	Average Depth (m)	
		NE End	SW End
Recent 'crush'	(44)	0.25m	0.30m
Made-ground	(45)	0.25m	-
Contaminated 'diesel-soil'	(46)	0.40m	0.50m
Mixed clay	(47)	0.10m	0.20m
Natural clay (max machined depth)	(48)	Unknown	Unknown
Summary			
Trench 3 was located in the centre-north of the site.			
Trench 3 contained seven archaeological features, [20], [22], [24], [26], [28], [30]. [32].			

5.5 Trench 4

5.5.1 Archaeological features and structures were present within Trench 4 and shall be discussed from south-east to north-west. Post-holes [16] and [18] were sealed by made-ground (45), and cut the mixed clay (47). Several structures were overlain by the made-ground, but due to asbestos contamination, it was not possible to clean or excavate them to further ascertain their position in the stratigraphic matrix.

5.5.2 Post-hole [16] was located towards the south-eastern end of the trench. It had an oval shape in plan with a width of 0.40m, a length of 0.64m and a depth of 0.13m. The sides were slightly concave and the base uneven. The fill (17) consisted of a firm dark grey slightly sandy and silty clay which contained three sherds of Early Iron Age pottery (7g).

5.5.3 Post-hole [18], was recorded close-by. It was sub-circular in plan measured

0.54m by 0.40m and was 0.10m deep. The sides and base were concave. The single fill (19) was a firm dark grey slightly sandy and silty clay and contained one sherd of Early Iron Age pottery (3g).

- 5.5.4 Further to the north-east was an *in-situ* and visible segment of brick wall (15), incorporating the yellow 'Cambridge' brick of later 19th/ 20th-century date, built within a construction cut [14]. Work to record the wall or excavate the construction cut could not be undertaken due to the presence of asbestos contamination within that horizon. The orientation of the wall could not be determined.
- 5.5.5 At the centre of Trench 4 the remains of a narrow red brick wall/plinth (13) were observed at the base of the trench. A brick sample taken from it was identified as 19th-century. The wall was only one course thick and the wall orientated northeast to southwest. Work to record or excavate the wall further could not be undertaken due to the presence of asbestos contamination within that horizon. The bricks' similar form and date to one taken from wall (6) to the north west suggests that each of these structures is contemporary.
- 5.5.6 A chalk-lined drain (08) of likely 19th-century date was recorded towards the western end of the trench. It was 0.35m wide and had an observed length of at least 3.0m, orientated approximately east to west. The drain had two side rows of roughly hafted/squared chalk blocks, the individual blocks of which ranged in size between 90mm width by 220-280mm length. The remainder of the drain was filled with stiff grey clay. Excavation and recording could not be undertaken on the drain due to the presence of asbestos contamination at that part of the trench and in the horizon above. The drain was recorded within a construction cut [07], but due contamination this could not be further investigated.
- 5.5.7 A large possible pit [11] was truncated by drain (08). Due to heavy hydrocarbon contamination, the pit could not be excavated. The pit extended 3.0m east to west by at least 1.80m north to south. The unexcavated fill (12) was a firm dark grey slightly sandy and silty clay.

Several sherds of 18th to 19th-century pottery were recovered from the top of the deposit, including a sherd of English Stoneware and three sherds of Transfer-printed earthenwares (127g). It is likely to have been a refuse pit located to the rear of an 18th to 19th-century dwelling which fronted onto Balsham High Street.

- 5.5.8 A small circular post-hole [9] of likely 19th-20th-century date was located a short distance to the east. It had a diameter of 0.40m and a depth of 0.15m. The sides were regular and sloping and the base sloped down to the south. The fill (10) was a firm dark grey slightly sandy and silty clay. Small flecks and fragments of 19th-20th-century CBM were recovered from the top of the feature, but not retained.
- 5.5.9 A short segment of 19th-century wall (6) was recorded towards the north-western end of the trench. The wall was recorded in construction cut [5]. Work to record the wall or excavate the construction cut could not be undertaken due to the presence of asbestos contamination within that horizon. A sample of brick indicated that the wall was of 19th-century date and was possibly associated with wall/plinth (13).
- 5.5.10 At the north-western end of the trench, a segment of remaining 'Cambridge' yellow-brick wall was observed (4). It was allocated to a construction cut [3]. The wall was surrounded by made-ground, and due to asbestos contamination within that horizon, further excavation or recording could not be undertaken. The wall was likely to be of 20th-century date, and was likely to be related to structure (15), to the south-east.
- 5.5.11 Within the made ground (45), in the vicinity of Trench 4, there was a large amount of yellow brick rubble, likely to have come from a previous building which fronted onto Balsham High Street, to which structures (4) and (15) belonged.

TRENCH 4	Figure 5	Plates 16-22
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 50m	Recorded Ground level 113.70m OD at NW end to 113.70m OD at the SE end

		Maximum Depth 1.30m	
Deposit	Context No.	Average Depth (m)	
		NW End	SE End
Recent 'crush'	(44)	0.20m	0.10m
Made-ground	(45)	1.0m	-
Contaminated 'diesel-soil'	(46)	-	-
Mixed clay	(47)	0.10m	0.40m
Natural clay (max machined depth)	(48)	Unknown	Unknown
<p>Summary</p> <p>Trench 4 was located at the northern end of the site.</p> <p>Trench4 contained eight archaeological features and structures, [16], [18], (15), (13), (8), (6) ,[9] and (4).</p>			

6 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Flint

By Ella Egberts

Introduction

- 6.1.1 The archaeological evaluation conducted at the above site resulted in the recovery of a three struck flints. This report quantifies and describes the material, comments on its significance and recommends any further work needed for it to attain its full research potential. Each piece of struck flint was examined by eye and catalogued by context (table 1). All measurements follow the methodology of Saville (1980).

Description

- 6.1.2 Three pieces of struck flint were recovered from the site, two of which were obtained from fill (38), of ditch [37], the third was found in fill (2) of pit [1]. The details of the struck flint are presented in table 1. One of the two flints from context (38) is moderately burnt, retaining its light grey to dark grey translucency but showing fire-crazing throughout.

Raw materials

- 6.1.3 Two of the three pieces are made of fine-grained, translucent black to dark grey flint. The third piece, from context (38), is made on a courser grained, dark grey flint with courser light grey mottling. All three pieces contain a small piece of nodular cortex. The cortex on the burnt flint from context (38) is worn thin suggesting this flake was struck from a weathered nodule, possibly sourced from Quaternary sand and gravel or alluvial fan deposits in the vicinity (British Geological Survey 2017).

Condition

- 6.1.4 The three pieces are in various conditions with the burnt flake from context (38) being slightly patinated on both sides and showing some battering along the ribs on the dorsal side. The other piece from context (38) is not patinated and in a fresher condition. The flint from context (2) is in good, sharp condition and is, unlike the other pieces, expected not to have been

moved far from the place of discard.

Context	Feature	Shape	Length (mm)	Breadth (mm)	Thickness (mm)	Weight (g)	Colour	Cortex	Description
38	Fill	Flake	47	30	13	14.8	Translucent grey	Worn nodular cortex	Moderately burnt flint flake. The dorsal side is characterised by two negative flake scars with some patina, parallel to these a patch of worn nodular cortex remains.
38	Fill	Flake	26	21	6	3.3	Dark grey with courser, lighter grey mottling	Nodular	Flint flake with the dorsal side consisting of one negative flake scar and a small patch of cortex at the distal end.
2	Pit	Flake	25	36	10	5.7	Translucent black, dark grey	Nodular	Flint flake with the dorsal side consisting of a negative flake scar, a small patch of cortex on the left edge, and battering and damage at the proximal end. The latter possible suggesting the piece flaked off of a hammer stone.

Table 1: Details of the struck flint from Balsham, Cambridgeshire.

Technology, typology and dating

- 6.1.5 None of the pieces are strictly chronologically diagnostic although technological and typological characteristics of the flakes (wide, simply struck) possibly suggest a broad Late Neolithic to Bronze Age date. The flake from context 2 shows some battering and damage to the proximal end on the dorsal side, possibly suggesting this is flake was (accidentally) chipped off a hammer/pounding stone.

Significance and recommendations

- 6.1.6 Due to the size of the assemblage and the lack of truly diagnostic, its interpretative potential is limited and no further analytical work is recommended. It does, however, indicate activity at the site occurring during the prehistoric period which further fieldwork could potentially elucidate.

6.2 Prehistoric Pottery

By Sarah Percival

- 6.2.1 A small assemblage of 91 sherds of prehistoric pottery weighing 715g was collected from six features in three trenches (Table 2). All of the pottery is of earlier Iron Age date and includes a partially complete fine tripartite bowl from pit [1], Trench 2. The remainder of the assemblage is fragmented and somewhat abraded. Three sherds have limescale adhering to the interior surfaces and two sherds are encrusted consistent with having been deposited in waterlogged conditions. A little over 3.5% of the sherds by weight were collected from samples.

Trench	Feature	Feature type	Context	Quantity	Weight (g)	No. of vessels by rim count
2	1	Pit	2	63	538	2
	37	Ditch	38	19	96	1
3	20	Posthole	21	2	59	
	28	Ditch	29	4	12	
4	16	Posthole	17	3	7	
	18	Posthole	19	1	3	
Total				92	715	3

Table 2: Quantity and weight of prehistoric pottery by trench and feature

Methodology

6.2.2 The assemblage was analysed in accordance with the guidelines for analysis and publication laid down by the Prehistoric Ceramic Research Group (PCRG 1997, 2010). The total assemblage was studied and a full catalogue prepared. The sherds were examined using a binocular microscope (x10 magnification) and were divided into fabric groups defined on the basis of inclusion types. Fabric codes were prefixed by a letter code representing the main inclusion type: F representing flint, G representing grog and Q representing quartz. Vessel form was recorded: R representing rim sherds, B representing base sherds, D representing decorated sherds and U representing undecorated body sherds. The sherds were counted and weighed to the nearest whole gram. Decoration, condition, food residues and sooting were also noted. The catalogue was recorded using Microsoft Excel 2010.

Nature of the Assemblage

6.2.3 The assemblage comprises a range of flint-tempered sandy sherds including coarsely tempered fabrics alongside finewares with small flint inclusions and burnished surfaces (Table 3). Three rims were recovered. Two rims came from fill (2) of pit [1] in Trench 2. These include a large body sherd and other joining fragments from a fine burnished bowl in sandy fabric (QFfine). The tripartite bowl has a prominent rounded shoulder and high slightly flared rim similar to examples found at Darmsden and Stansted (Brudenell 2012 fig.4.1, form O1). A second rim from pit [1] is made of coarse flinty fabric (F1) and is flattened. The rim is too small to identify a form. A stepped base was also found in pit [1]. The third rim sherd was recovered from ditch [37], trench 2. This rim is also made of fine sandy burnished fabric and is from a small bowl or cup with direct pointed rim ending.

Fabric	Description	Quantity	Weight (g)	% weight
F1	Common coarse flint >5mm in coarse sandy matrix	22	249	34.83%
QF	Common rounded quartz sand with moderate medium flint >3mm	48	293	40.98%
Qffine	Common rounded quartz sand with	22	173	24.20%

	moderate medium flint >1mm			
Total		92	715	100.00%

Table 3: Quantity and weight of prehistoric pottery by fabric

6.2.4 The pottery was principally collected from pit [1] and ditch [37] in Trench 2 (Table 1). Further sherds were found in small quantities in posthole [20] and ditch [28] in Trench 3 and postholes [16] and [18] in trench 4. Despite the absence of diagnostic sherds within the assemblages from trenches 3 and 4 the strong similarity in fabric types between the pottery recovered from all three trenches suggests that they are contemporary.

Discussion

6.2.5 The semi-complete profile found in pit [1] is from a tripartite bowl of Brudenell's form O1 'with pronounced rounded shoulders and flared rims rising from a well-defined neck angle', and current from c.600 BC (Brudenell 2012, 244). This vessel along with the characteristic mix of flint tempered coarse ware sherds and further fineware cup or bowl rim suggests a date for the assemblage in the earlier Iron Age, contemporary with pottery found at Hay Close, Balsham (MCB17783) where open area excavation identified Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pits which contained domestic debris (Crawley 2017).

6.3 Post-Roman Pottery Assessment

By Chris Jarrett

Introduction

6.3.1 A total of four sherds/3 estimated number of vessels (ENV)/127g of post-Roman pottery were recovered from the archaeological work, none of which is unstratified. The pottery dates solely to the post-medieval period and more specifically the 19th century. Only one sherd of pottery is laminated and none of the sherds are residual, indicating that the majority of the pottery was deposited fairly rapidly after breakage or being discarded. The state of fragmentation of the assemblage can be defined as only sherd material, although vessel shapes could be assigned to all of the sherds. The pottery was quantified by sherd count (SC), estimated number of vessels

(ENVs) and weight. Pottery was recovered from a single context as a small sized group (fewer than 30 sherds).

6.3.2 The assemblage was examined macroscopically and microscopically using a binocular microscope (x20), and recorded in a database format file by fabric, form and decoration. As no formal coding system exists for post-medieval ceramics in Cambridgeshire, then the ceramics have been classified according to the coding system used by the Museum of London (2014). The pottery is discussed as an index.

Index

- 6.3.3 Context [12], spot date: mid-late 19th century
- 6.3.4 English Stoneware (ENGS), 1700–1900, one sherd, 1 ENV, 82g, form: cylindrical bottle. Wall sherd with an external dark brown ferruginous slip and probably a Derbyshire product. 19th century
- 6.3.5 Transfer-printed earthenwares (TPW), 1780–1900, one sherd, 1 ENV, 3g, form: plate. A wall sherd of a plate decorated with the Willow pattern, dated from c. 1789. The sherd is laminated.
- 6.3.6 Transfer-printed earthenwares (TPW), 1780–1900, two sherds, 1 ENV, 42g, form: dinner plate. Rim sherd, plain edged with a moulded fine scallop border in relief and a base sherd with a footing. The vessel is unusual for having both a blue and black transfer-printed design, consisting of a blue background featuring simple flowers with leaves and stems and a central basal border comprised of heart-shaped motifs alternating with pendants. Overlaying the blue-transfer printed design are black transfer-printed motifs that include simple flowers with thorny stems, while the centre design consists of flowers and possible fruits. On the underside of the base there is evidence for a black transfer-printed design name or makers mark, surviving only as ‘...?A.’, as well as a very faint illegible over-glazed painted legend that starts with the letter S and ends with a Y. The design dates to the mid-late 19th century

Significance, potential and recommendations for further work

6.3.7 The assemblage is of no significance as the material is small in quantity, fragmentary and therefore difficult to assign any meaning to. The assemblage has a national ceramic profile, i.e. the pottery encompasses types that were made in major ceramic production centres, such as The Potteries, Staffordshire and marketed across the breadth of the British Isles. The pottery has only the potential to date the deposit it was recovered from. There are no recommendations for further work on the material.

6.4 Building Material

6.4.1 Dr Kevin Hayward

6.4.2 Introduction and Aims

6.4.3 4 bags of loose stone and 2 whole bricks were retained from the evaluation at Balsham Buildings Cambridgeshire ECB5129 NGR TL 4649 5898

6.4.4 This small assemblage (7 examples 8329gf) was assessed in order to:

- Identify the fabric of the stone in order to determine what the material was made of and from where it may be coming from.
- Identify whether the stone is natural or has been worked in some way
- Make comment on the 2-whole brick from structures 6 and 13 and assign them a spot date.
- The database for this site is BALSHAM cbm.accdb for the brick and BALSHAMstone.accdb for the stone
- Made recommendations for further study.

Methodology

6.4.5 The application of a 1kg masons hammer and sharp chisel to each example ensured that a small fresh fabric surface was exposed. The fabric was examined at x20 magnification using a long arm stereomicroscope or hand lens (Gowland x10).

6.4.6 As there was no Cambridgeshire stone or ceramic building material fabric

reference collection housed at PCA each new stone and brick fabric from this site was prefixed by *BAL* followed by 1, 2, 3 etc thus *BAL1*; *BAL2*. Consultation of the relevant 1:50000 geological maps for Saffron Walden and Cambridge and relevant geological memoirs (Osborne-White 1932; Worssam & Taylor 1969; Moorlock et. Al. 2003) ensured an understanding of the geology of this part of England.

Geological Background

- 6.4.7 Balsham lies in a part of the British Isles characterised by geologically young Quaternary, Tertiary and Cretaceous sediments. The oldest rocks consist of the Upper Cretaceous Upper Chalk Lewes Nodular Chalk and Seaford Chalk Formations, which outcrop immediately to the west of the village. Throughout this region, Quaternary Glacial deposits consisting of the chalky, sandy and stony boulder clay and Glaciofluvial deposits (Lowestoft Formation) mask these chalk deposits. Indeed, the site itself has a thick covering of Lowestoft Till. Included within the till in the Balsham area are hard exotic stones or erratics from northern and western Britain such as “*Carboniferous limestone, sandstones, quartzites, feldspathic grit, mica schist and basalt*” (Osborne-White 1932, 78). Mention is also made of Jurassic material from the Mid Jurassic ridge of Northamptonshire-Cambridgeshire-Rutland and Lincolnshire. Other than as a source of lime for fertilizer and mortar (Osborne-White 1932, 39 & 65), the chalk itself cannot be used as a building material, although thin flint bands within it and a localised nodular chalk rock may be used as building stone rubble. Slightly further afield (8-10km to the North-west) Totternhoe stone (also known as Burwell stone) from the underlying Lower Chalk (Worssam & Taylor 1969) has been used as a dimension stone within the Cambridge area. Suitable local sources of brick clay included Glaciolacustrine deposits at Burrough Green and Brinkley just 5km north-east of Balsham (Osborne-White 1932, 105) and at Little Bradley 9km due east (Osborne-White 1932, 105).

BRICK 2 examples 7800g

- 6.4.8 BAL6 – bright orange sandy fabric with inclusions of burnt flint c20mm across

6.4.9 BAL 7 – bright orange sandy fabric fine sandy

6.4.10 The two brick samples from linear brick structure [6] and step [13] could on the basis of mortar type, size and form be dated from at least as late as 1825 through to 1925. They are bonded by the same very hard light grey mortar comparable to Roman cement which was only patented after 1850. They are both crisply made, very wide 110mm with sharp arises with the example from [13] having a defined gentle frog 14cm long x 4cm across. The example from [6] is especially thick 70mm. Combined these features were in accordance with mid to late 19th century mortar. The sandy brick fabric would suggest derivation from a local glacial brick earth.

6.4.11 It was seen during excavation (Peter Crawley per obs.) that frogged yellow Cambridge Gault bricks were present which is again indicative of mid-19th to mid-20th century builds.

STONE 5 examples 529g

6.4.12 A review of 5 rock types, their geological character, source and probable function/ form are summarised below (Table 4).

MoL fabric code	Description	Geological Type and source	Quantity	Use at ECB5129
BAL1	Burnt red oyster rich shelly packstone containing abundant burnt light grey bivalves (shells)	Middle Jurassic Limestone glacial erratic from the underlying Lowestoft Till redeposited from the Blisworth Limestone (Middle Jurassic (Bathonian) (Northamptonshire) (Osborne White 1932, 78)	1 example 295g	Erratic from underlying glacial till used as a prehistoric pot boiler in feature [2] Trench 2
BAL2	Burnt red brown fine sandstone – fresh surface reveals fine white (heated) cryptocrystalline quartz sandstone	Palaeogene quartz sandstone (Sarsen) from the underlying Lowestoft Till redeposited Palaeogene deposits from the surrounding areas (Osborne White 1932, 62	1 example 119g	Erratic pebble from underlying glacial till used as a prehistoric pot boiler in feature [2] Trench 2
BAL3	Hard fine black basic igneous rock	Metabasalt or Metadolerite erratic from underlying Lowestoft Till redeposited from	1 example	Natural erratic from underlying glacial till from feature [21]

	metabasalt or metadolerite	outcrops in northern and western Britain or even Norway (Osborne White 1932, 78)	85g	Trench 3
BAL4	Hard white vein quartz	Vein quartz probably from an igneous or metamorphic rock erratic from underlying Lowestoft Till redeposited from outcrops in northern and western Britain or even Norway (Osborne White 1932, 78)	1 example 10g	Natural erratic from underlying glacial till from feature [23] Trench 3
BAL5	Acid or alkaline feldspar rich microgranite or felsite. Containing pink potash (orthoclase) feldspar	Microgranite erratic from underlying Lowestoft Till redeposited from Mountsorrel granite complex Leicester or from outcrops in northern and western Britain or even Norway (Osborne White 1932, 78)	1 example 70g	Natural erratic from underlying glacial till from feature [37] Trench 2

Table 4 summarising the character, source, quantity and probable function of the main stone types

Summary

Petrology

6.4.13 Five rock lithotypes have been identified from this stone assemblage, are all natural and all derive from the underlying Lowestoft Till. Osborne-White in 1932 (78) describes a range of inclusions or erratics in this stony boulder clay at Balsham including rock types identified in this assemblage namely; Palaeogene sarsens, Jurassic sediments, basalts and metamorphic rocks. It would seem obvious that the pink microgranite from [32], and originally from the Mountsorrel granite complex in Leicestershire is another such example of an erratic. All the stone from [2] has been burnt which suggests that they were used as pot boilers to heat up the water for cooking. This may indicate prehistoric activity.

Brick

6.4.14 Linear brick structures [6] and [13] can be dated from 1850 and 1950, they are both well made, large and bonded with a hard, Roman cement, a mortar that was patented during the 19th century. Thus structures [6] and [13] are contemporary and post-date 18th century smithing activity in the area.

Context	Fabric	Material	Size	Date range of material		Latest dated material		Spot date	Spot date Mortar
2	BAL1 and BAL2	Pot boilers of natural cracked stone – sarsen and Blisworth Limestone from glacial erratics	2	4000bc	1000AD	4000bc	AD1000	4000bc – AD50	No mortar
6	BAL6	Unfrogged large wide well-made red sandy brick fabric with hard grey Roman mortar	1	1450	1900	1825	1900	1825-1900	1850-1950
13	BAL7	Frogged well-made red sandy brick with hard-light grey Roman mortar	1	1850	1950	1850	1950	1850-1925	1850-1950
21	BAL3	Glacial erratic basalt cobble	1					Natural	
23	BAL4	Glacial erratic quartz vein	1					Natural	
37	BAL5	Glacial erratic Mountsorrell Granite or related rock	1					Natural	

Table

5

Distribution

(Structures

in

bold)

Recommendation/Further work

6.4.15 The brick from structure

6.4.16 The stone retained from this site is dominated by exotic stone types. All of these however are natural and come from the underlying Lowestoft boulder clay, where at Balsham (Osborne-White 1932) there was found to be a rich array of sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic rocks. All of these were transported by ice during the Anglian Glaciation from outcrops in central, western and northern Britain as well as Scandinavia. Only the examples from [2] were used as pot boilers and may be prehistoric. Further excavation may reveal prehistoric features and stone artefacts such as saddle querns or pounders.

6.4.17 The brick structures are all modern or late Victorian and do not relate to 18th century smithying activity.

6.5 Animal Bone

6.5.1 Dr Kevin Rielly

6.6 Introduction

6.6.1 The site was situated in the central part of the village of Balsham, on the southern side of the High Street, this village located some 10km south-east of Cambridge. A total of four 50 by 2m evaluation trenches were arranged within an area some 110m north to south and 90m west to east. These uncovered a series of pits, post-holes and ditches, essentially taken from trenches 2, 3 and 4. There is evidence for rather extensive Early Iron Age activity, this followed by a considerable hiatus lasting until the latter part of the post-medieval era. Animal bones were recovered from fills within each of these three trenches, most recovered by hand but with a few taken from a small number of bulk samples.

Methodology

6.6.2 The bone was recorded to species/taxonomic category where possible and to size class in the case of unidentifiable bones such as ribs, fragments of longbone shaft and the majority of vertebra fragments. Recording follows

the established techniques whereby details of the element, species, bone portion, state of fusion, wear of the dentition, anatomical measurements and taphonomic including natural and anthropogenic modifications to the bone were registered. The sample collections were washed through a modified Siraf tank using a 1mm mesh and the subsequent residues were air dried and sorted. A concerted effort was undertaken to refit as many bones as possible, noting the actual number of fragments prior to refitting.

Description of faunal assemblage

6.6.3 The site provided a total of 33 bones, 27 by hand recovery and 6 from 2 bulk samples. Following refitting the former total reduces to 21 bones. All of the bones were well preserved with no obvious signs of heavy fragmentation and all were recovered from cut features. There would appear to be a rather similar date of deposition across all of the bone bearing fills, here based on the finds and/or the stratigraphy. The species range found in each fill is shown in Table 1.

6.6.4 Notably, the majority of the bones were taken from the basal fill (2) of pit [1], providing a mix of domestic and game species by hand collection and equid as well as small passer from the bulk samples. The latter were provided by the contents of a broken Early Iron Age vessel situated at the transition between the upper and lower fills of this feature. The equid bone is a fragment of mandible (the basal part of the ascending ramus), while the small passer is represented by the major part of the left ulna. There is a mixture of parts amongst the hand collected assemblage from this pit, including a roe deer tibia, a cattle scapula, pelvis, calcaneus and metacarpus; a sheep/goat skull, two radii and a mandible; and a pig mandible. Of interest is the very young age of the cattle scapula, possibly signifying an infant mortality and therefore local husbandry. In addition the relatively complete metacarpus allows for the calculation of a shoulder height (following von den Driesch and Boessneck 1974) of 1027mm, which is certainly within the expected size range for cattle from this period (after Davis 1987, 178). Several of these bones had been gnawed by dogs, perhaps signifying secondary burial, while others displayed heavy butchery

marks. Of particular note in this respect was the aforementioned metacarpus with a series of grazing cuts to the midshaft, certainly made with a heavy metal instrument.

6.6.5 Otherwise bones were found in rather small quantities from a variety of postholes and ditches, these without any gnawing or butchery marks.

Trench:	2		3				4	All
Cut:	1	37	20	22	28	30	18	
Feature:	P	DR	PH	PH	D	D	PH	
Species								
Cattle	4		1			1		6
Equid	(1)							
Cattle-size	3(3)			2			1	6
Sheep/Goat	4				1			5
Pig	1			1				2
Sheep-size	1	(1)						1
Roe deer	1							1
Small passer	(1)							
Grand total	14(5)	(1)	1	3	1	1	1	21(6)

Table 6. Species representation amongst the hand collected and sieved (in brackets) bones sorted by trench, cut, feature and species using refitted total fragment counts.

Conclusions and recommendations for further work

6.6.6 The quantity of bones is not large but they are undoubtedly well preserved, minimally fragmented and well dated. Indeed each of the bone bearing deposits are likely to date to the Early Iron Age period, their remarkably good preservation contrasting with their great antiquity. These bones and especially those from the contents of pit [1] clearly represent a mix of domestic waste alongside a potential 'ritual' deposit taken from the contents of a pot. Although here, the actual contents, comprising an equid mandible and a small passer wing bone, may perhaps be suggestive of a fortuitous juxtaposition rather than the actual contents of this vessel.

6.6.7 There is clearly a high potential for the discovery of more bones, of a similar date, should further excavation be undertaken at the site. While it cannot be suggested that such work will produce more than a moderately sized collection, the state of the bones found at the evaluation stage certainly indicates that it will represent a very useful addition to the current evidence concerning Early Iron Age animal usage in this area.

6.7 Plant Macrofossils

By Kate Turner

Introduction

6.7.1 This report summarises the findings of the assessment of three bulk samples taken during the archaeological evaluation of land at 7 High Street, Balsham. These samples were taken from a pit, a small ditch and the contents of a pot contained within feature [1], the context information for which is given in table 6.

6.7.2 The aim of this assessment is to:

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

Context No.	Cut	Context type	Trench number	Interpretation
2	1	Fill	2	Fill of pit
2	1	Fill	2	Fill of pot in feature [1], sample <3>
38	37	Fill	2	Fill of small ditch

Table 7: Context information for environmental samples, ECB5129

Methodology

6.7.3 Three environmental bulk samples, ranging from one to four litres in volume, were processed using the flotation method; material was collected using a 300 µm mesh for the light fraction and a 1 mm mesh for the heavy residue. The heavy residue was then dried, sieved at 1, 2 and 4 mm 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).

- 6.7.4 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

- 6.7.5 Environmental material was poorly preserved in the heavy fraction. Low concentrations of wood charcoal were recorded in sample <3>, however the majority of these were small, less than 4 mm in length/width, with only a minimal number of identifiable pieces reported.
- 6.7.6 All of the assessed samples contained mammal bone; samples <1> and <3> contained low concentrations of large animal bone, less than ten pieces per sample, with a similar amount of small animal bone reported in samples <2>. Samples <1> and <2> also contained a small amount of fragmented pottery.
- 6.7.7 All the material collected from the heavy residue has been catalogued and passed to the relevant specialists for further assessment. A full account of the material reported is given in table 2.

Flots

- 6.7.8 Out of the three processed samples, all, with the exception of sample <3>, produced flot residues. Wood charcoal was reported in both samples <1> and <2>; concentrations were moderate, between thirty-one and one-hundred pieces per sample, though this material was heavily fragmented and only sample <1> contained any material that could be identified to species (<5 specimens). Other macrobotanical material was scarce, with only a small number of fat-hen seeds (*Chenopodium album*) reported in

sample <1> and a single broken example of *Rubus* sp. (brambles) in sample <2>.

6.7.9 Low concentrations of terrestrial mollusc shells were present in all of the flot residues; both samples contained a small number of unidentified juvenile examples and scattered fragmented shell. A small number of specimens of *Vallonia* sp. were additionally found in sample <2>, whilst sample <1> contained a single broken shell of *Candidula* sp.

6.7.10 A full account of the material reported in the flots is given in the appendix.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Further Work

6.7.11 To summarise, the preservation of environmental remains in the Balsham samples was poor. None of the assessed samples contained an environmental assemblage of suitable size to warrant additional analysis (>100 specimens of any category). Based on this, no further specialist analysis is recommended, though a summary of the results should be included in any subsequent site publications.

7 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Archaeological remains were observed within Trenches 2, 3 and 4. Two periods were represented: The Early Iron Age and the 18th-19th-century to modern. Trench 1 was devoid of archaeological features.
- 7.2 The Early Iron Age activity, consisting of six well-dated post-holes and ditches ([1], [37], [20], [28], [16] and [18]) was observed within Trenches 2 and 3 and at the south-eastern end of Trench 4. It was noted that the strong similarity in fabric types of the recovered pottery suggested that they are contemporary. The similar form, appearance of the fills and proximity of further features [33], [35], [39] [32] and [20] indicates that they are also likely to be of Early Iron Age date.
- 7.3 The Early Iron Age features were relatively deep (on average 1.0m deep), and had not suffered greatly from truncation. The subsequent historical development of the site had seen the ground surface 'levelled-up' with no cellaring or basements due to the heavy clay ground-conditions, which appears to have maintained a high water-table. It was noted that several potsherds have limescale consistent with having been deposited in waterlogged conditions.
- 7.4 There is no surviving former land surface or original topsoil/subsoils associated with the earlier prehistoric activity. Deposit (46), known as a 'diesel soil' was heavily contaminated with hydrocarbons and probably represented the former topsoil/subsoil deposits, although radically altered in its composition by the contamination. This layer clearly sealed the Iron Age features.
- 7.5 Pit [1] contained a dark fill (2) with inclusions of pottery, small amounts of wood charcoal, two burnt stones ('pot-boilers') and a variety of faunal remains suggesting domestic activity close by. A semi-complete tripartite bowl (Brudenell's form O1), animal bones and a glacial erratic stone appeared to have been placed deliberately on top of this fist fill as a non-mundane or 'ritual' action. The pit may then have been allowed to in-fill through natural silting.

- 7.6 The early Iron Age post-holes formed no clear pattern although six of them did appear to be found in pairs. A perceived relationship which may have been due simply to their presence within a narrow trial trench however. Without seeing their full extent it is impossible at this stage
- 7.7 Ditches [37] and [39] within Trench 2 and [28] and [30] within Trench 3, also did not form a clear pattern. That ditch [37] for example, does not appear within Trench 3 to the north suggests that it has probably 'turned off' this alignment and the ditches probably formed small curving enclosures.
- 7.8 It is highly likely that the Early Iron Age remains on the site represents a continuation of the activity observed at Hay Close (MCB17783, ECB2374), here comparable pits and ditches indicative of domestic activity ranged from Bronze Age to Early Iron Age date. Overall the domestic activity was likely to be linked with a small settlement or farmstead relatively common in this part of South Cambridgeshire. It is known that the Icknield Way, now the line of the A11, acted as a focus for later prehistoric activity (Taylor 1998).
- 7.9 Although this Early Iron Age activity was localised to trenches at the centre stretching into the north-east of the site, the relatively limited sample of the site investigated in the trial trenches means that it would be unsafe to rule out similar deposits occurring/ surviving elsewhere on the site.
- 7.10 The 18th-19th-century activity, not surprisingly was located within Trench 4, closest to Balsham High Street.
- 7.11 Here there was evidence for two buildings, an earlier red-brick building represented by two red-brick walls (13), (6), and a later building formed of Cambridge yellow brick represented by two structures (15) and (4). A large amount of yellow-brick rubble was contained within the made-ground layer (45) in the vicinity of Trench 4. It is likely that each of these buildings were demolished in turn, with the red brick samples dated from 1825 through to 1925. This date is perhaps too late to be linked with the possible smithy which is thought from early modern mapping to have existed at the northern end of the site and was accompanied by an absence of Iron slag from the site.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Joseph Mulhare for commissioning the work and to Hill Residential for sponsoring the project. PCA are also grateful to Gemma Stewart and Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team for their advice and for monitoring the work. The author would also like to thank Dave Curry, for his assistance on site, the operatives of J England Environmental Services and Jody, Hill Residential site manager. The machining was undertaken by Lloyd White of LK Construction, many thanks to him.

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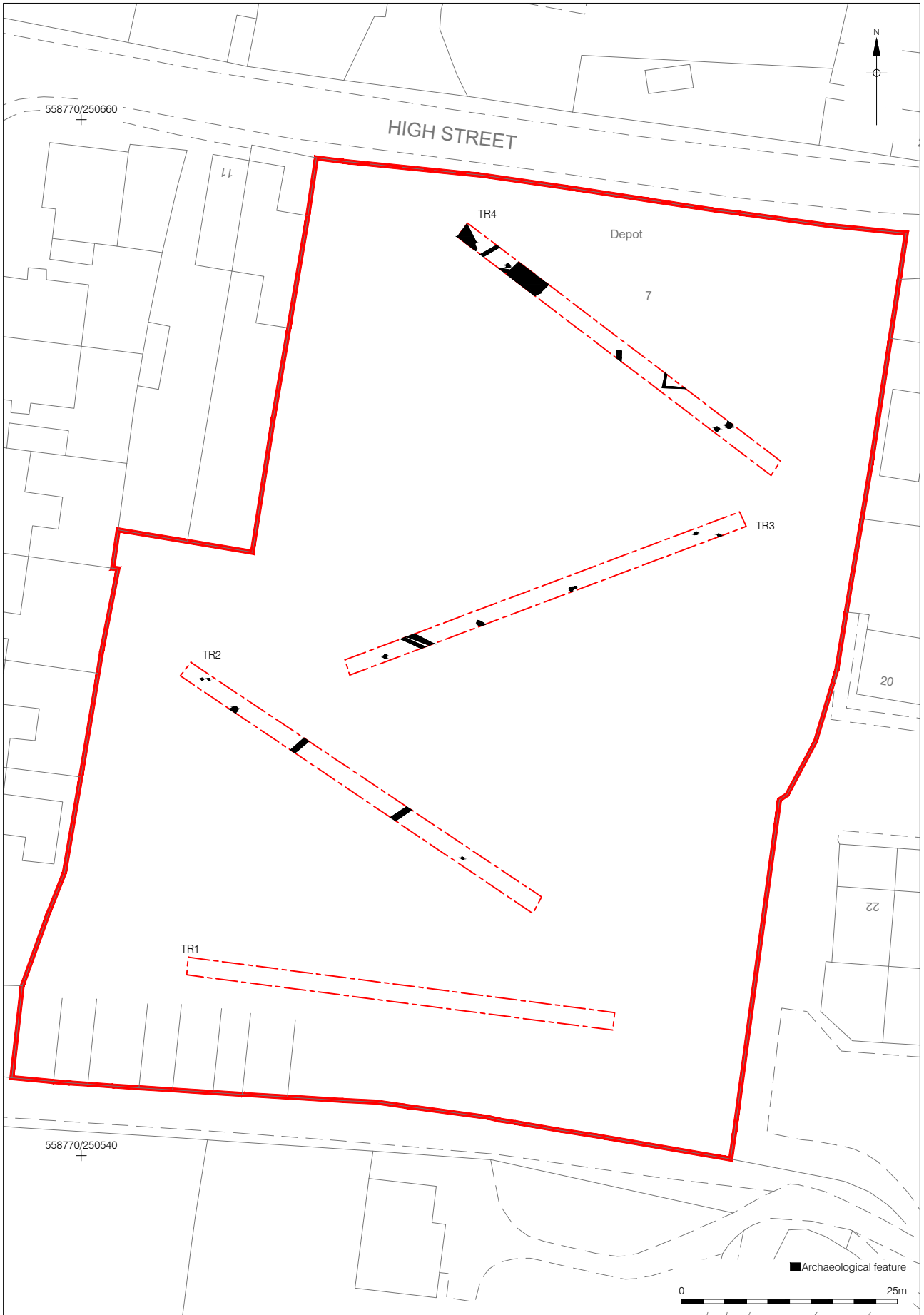
3) Old Maps Online (Date accessed 31/03/2017)

www.oldmapsonline.org



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



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Figure 2
Trench Location
1:625 at A4

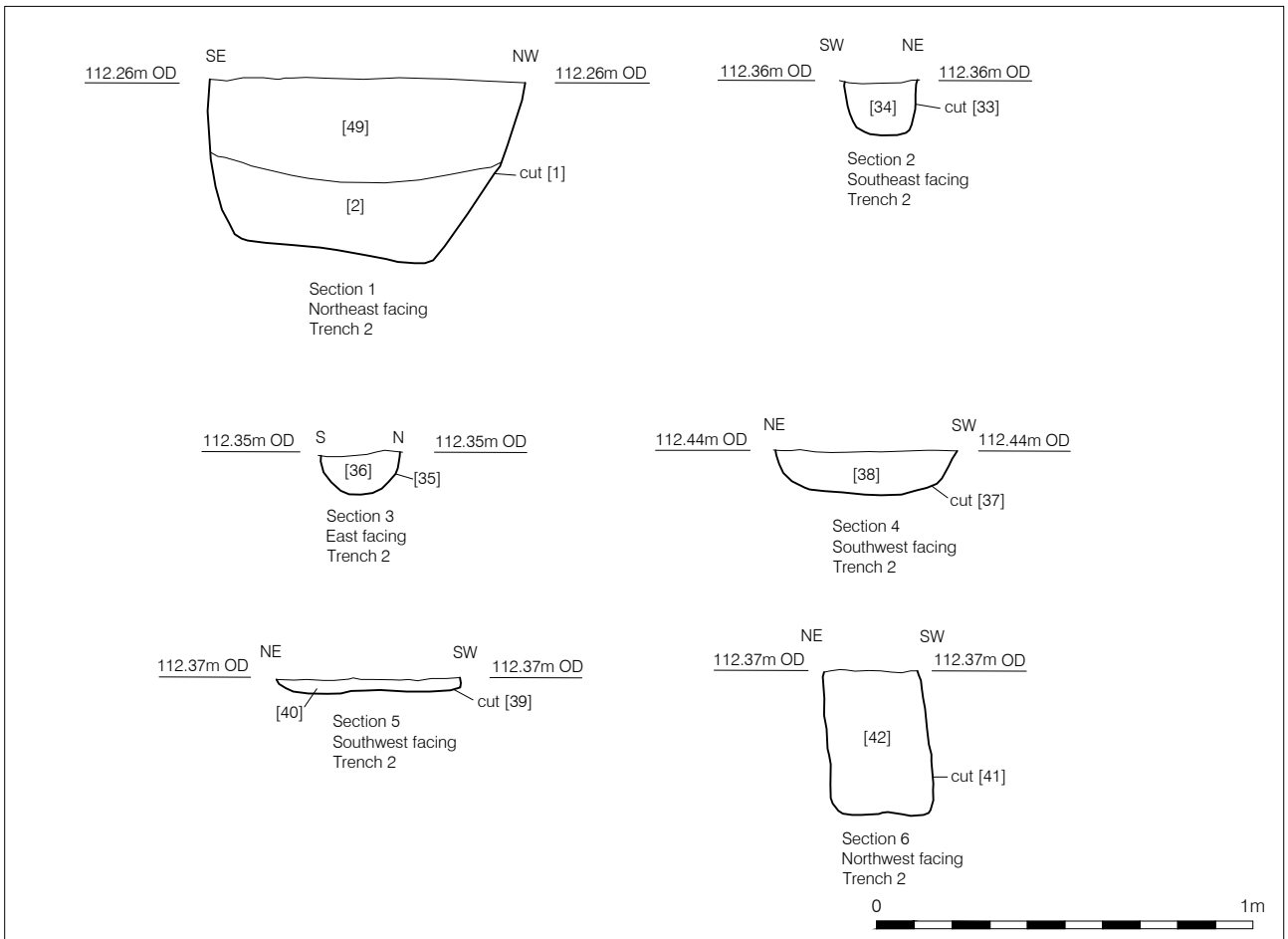
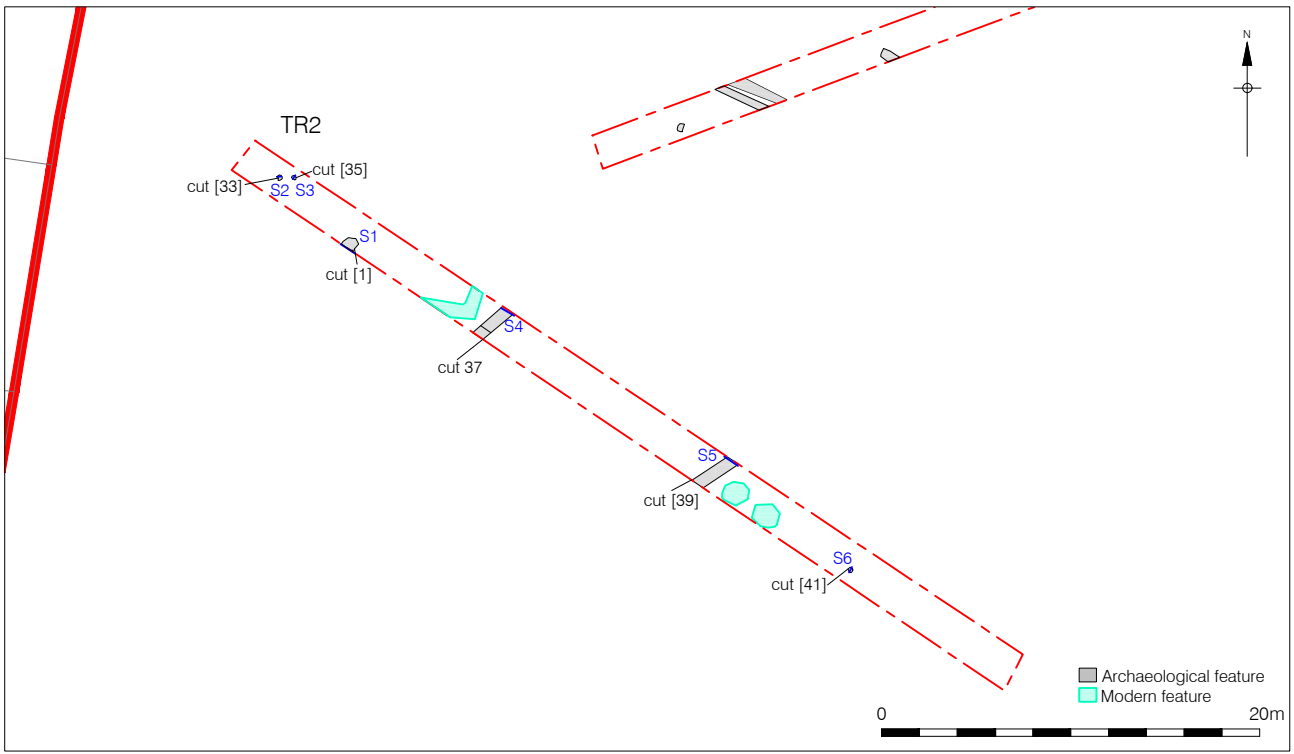


Figure 3
Trench 2: Plans and sections
Plan at 1:400, section at 1:20 at A4

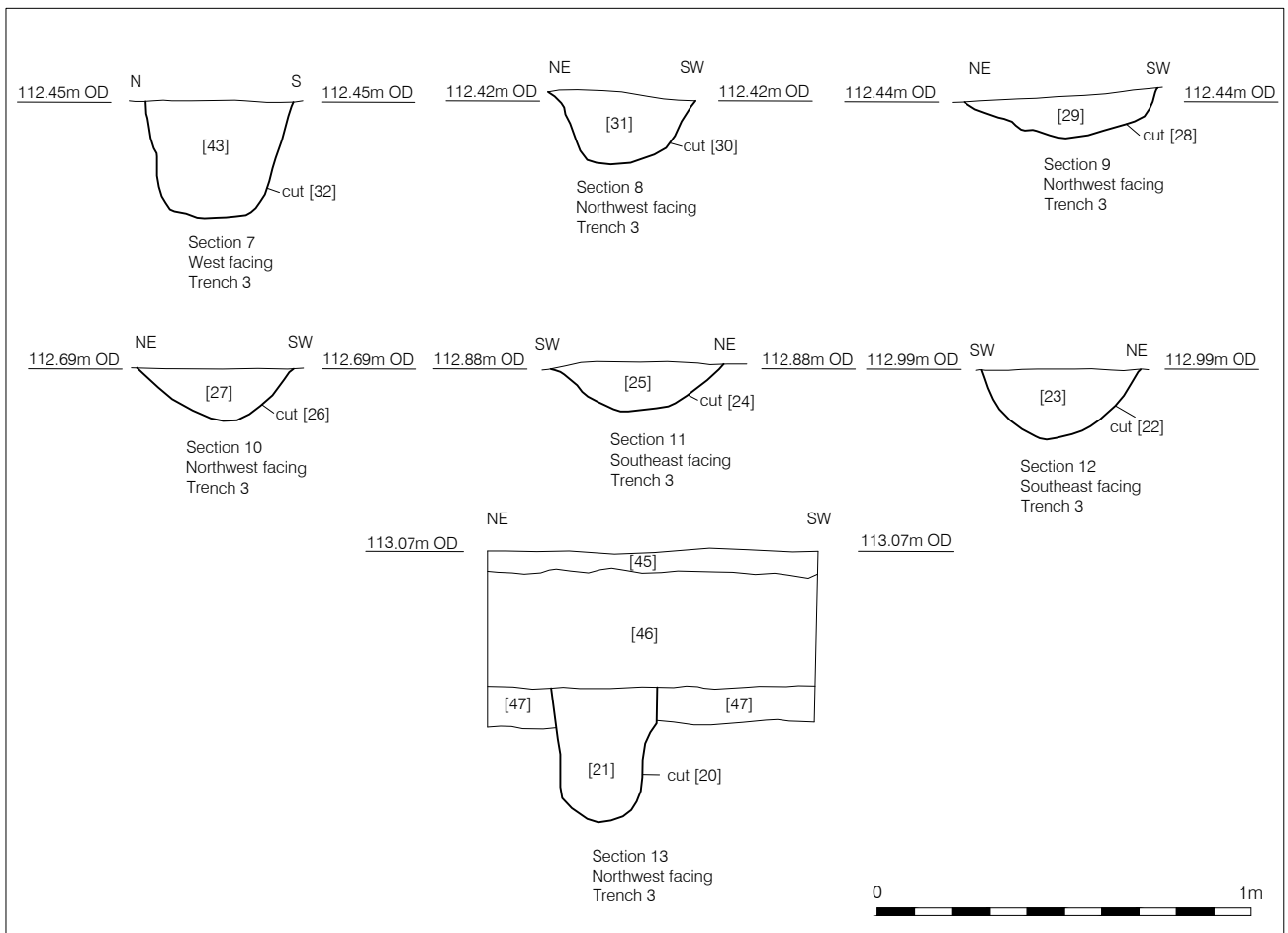
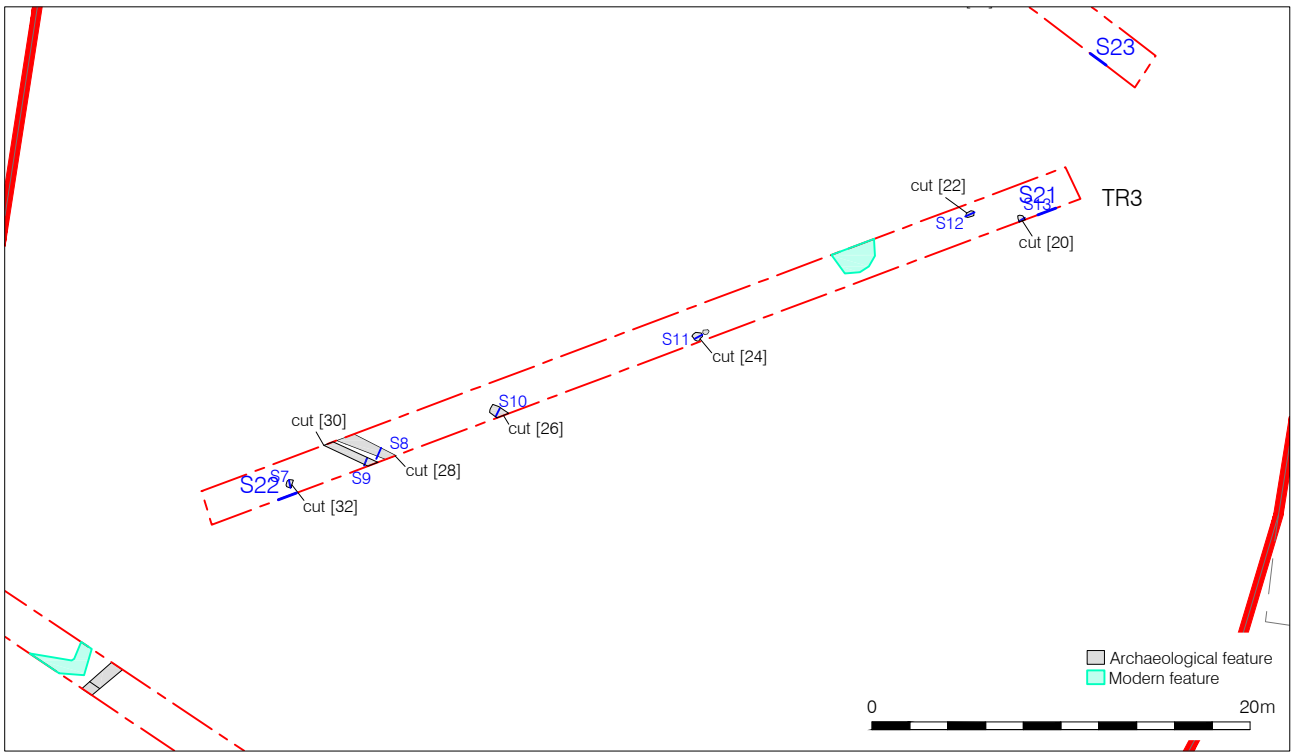


Figure 4
Trench 3: Plan and sections
Plan at 1:400, section at 1:20 at A4

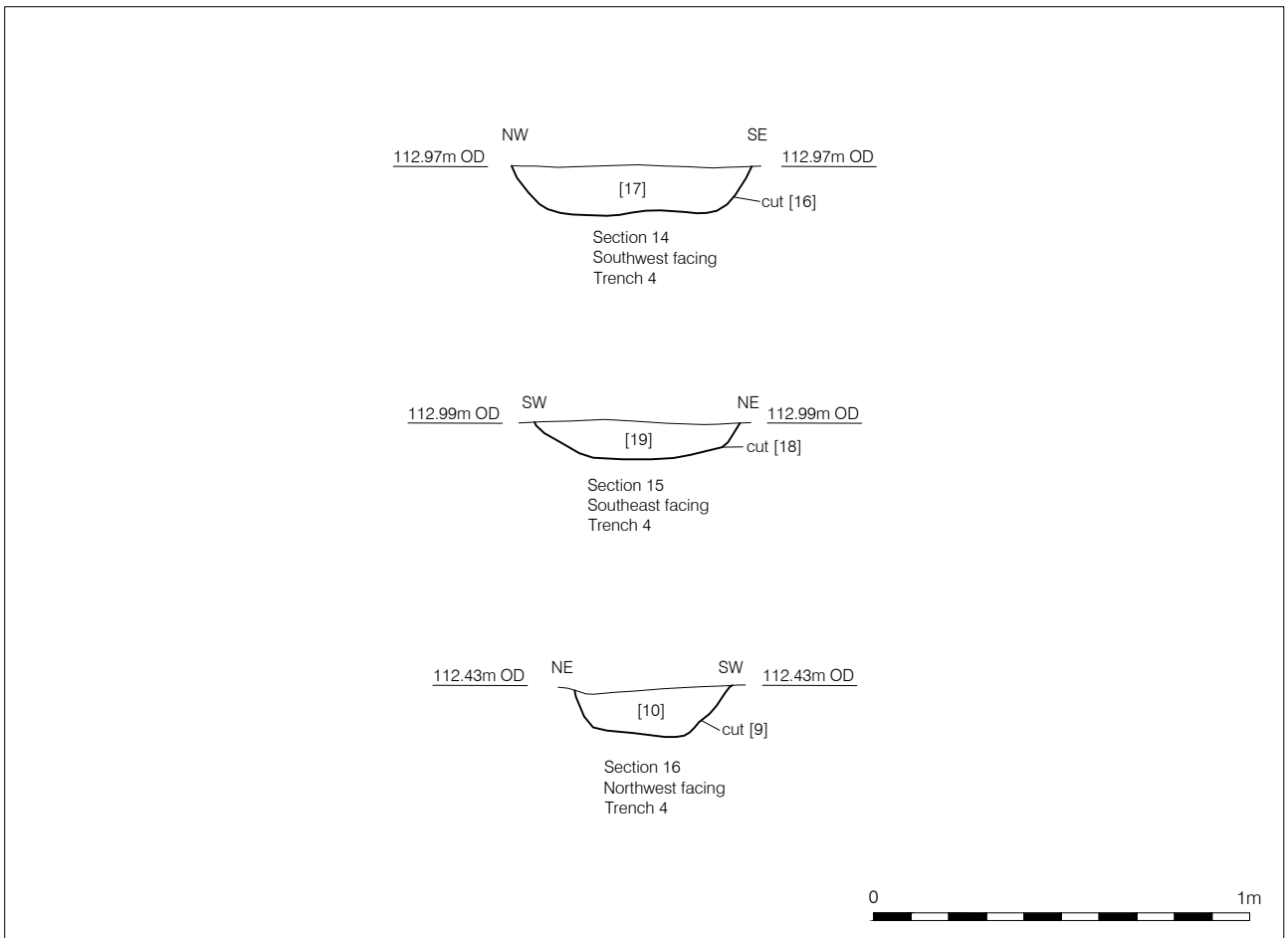
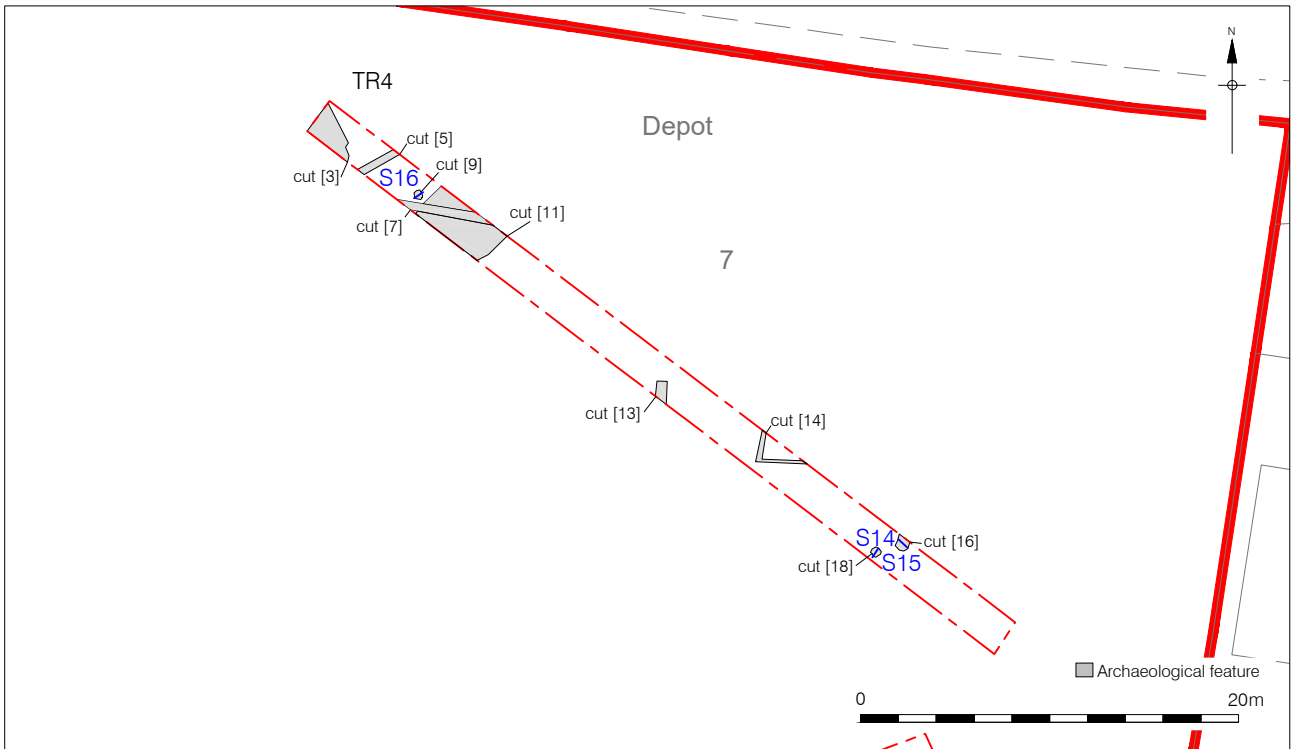


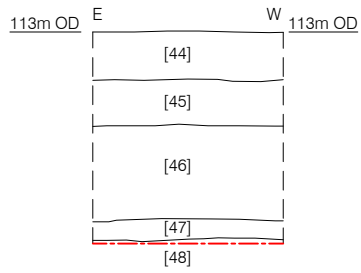
Figure 5
Trench 4: Plans and sections
Plan at 1:400, section at 1:20 at A4



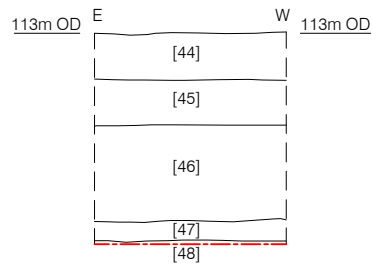
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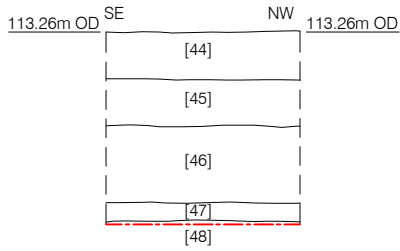
Figure 6
Representative section Location
1:625 at A4



Section 17
North facing
Trench 1



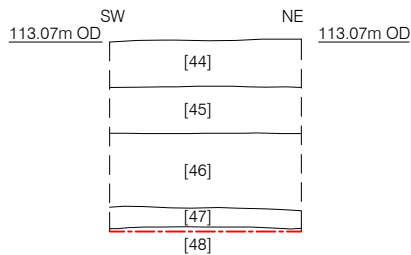
Section 18
North facing
Trench 1



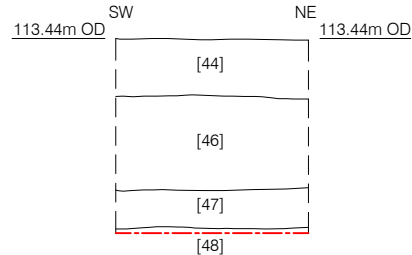
Section 19
Northeast facing
Trench 2



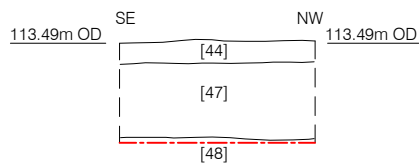
Section 20
Northeast facing
Trench 2



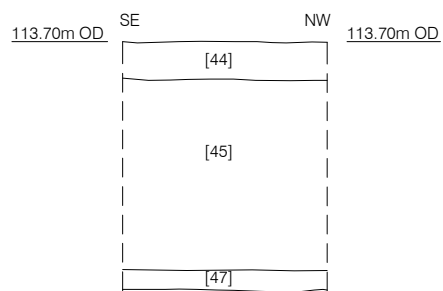
Section 21
Northwest facing
Trench 3



Section 22
Northwest facing
Trench 3



Section 23
Northeast facing
Trench 4



Section 24
Northeast facing
Trench 4



10 APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Figure 2 Machining on site looking northeast



Figure 2 Trench 1, looking east



Figure 3 Trench 2, looking northwest



Figure 4 Trench 2, Pit [1] showing pot, animal bone and stone erratic



Figure 5 Trench 2, Pit [1] following excavation, looking south



Figure 6 Trench 2, Ditch [37], looking west



Figure 7 Trench 2, Post-hole [41] looking west



Figure 8 Trench 3, looking west



Figure 9 Trench 2, post-hole [20], looking south



Figure 10 Trench 2, post-hole [22], looking south



Figure 11 Trench 2, pit [24], looking north



Figure 12 Trench 2, pit [26], looking southeast



Figure 13 Trench 2, ditches [28] and [30], looking southwest



Figure 14 Trench 2, post-hole [32], looking east



Figure 15 Trench 4, looking northwest



Figure 16 Trench 4, post-hole [16], looking north



Figure 17 Trench 4, post-hole [18], looking west



Figure 18 Trench 4, structure (15), (contaminated and uncleaned) looking north



Figure 19 Trench 4, structure (13), (contaminated and uncleaned) looking south



Figure 20 Trench 4, chalk drain (8), truncating pit [11] looking southwest



Figure 21 Trench 4, wall (6), looking southeast



Figure 22 Trench 4, post-hole (9), looking northeast

11 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Interpretation	Trench Number
1	1	Cut	Pit	Pit	2
2	1	Deposit	Fill	Fill of Pit [1]	2
3	3	Cut	Construction Cut	Construction Cut for wall [4]	4
4	3	Structure	Wall	Yellow Brick Wall	4
5	5	Cut	Construction Cut	Construction Cut for wall [6]	4
6	5	Structure	Wall	Red brick wall	4
7	7	Cut	Construction Cut	Construction Cut for Drain	4
8	7	Structure	Chalk Lined Drain	Chalk Lined Drain	4
9	9	Cut	Post-hole	20 th Cent Post-hole	4
10	9	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [9]	4
11	11	Cut	Pit	Large Pit (unexcavated due to contamination)	4
12	11	Cut	Pit	Fill of Pit	4
13	N/A	Structure	Plinth/Wall	Red Brick Plinth/Wall	4
14	14	Cut	Construction Cut	Construction Cut for structure [15]	4
15	14	Structure	Wall	'Cambridge' yellow brick structure	4
16	16	Cut	Post-hole	Post-hole	4
17	16	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [16]	4
18	18	Cut	Post-hole	Post-hole	4
19	18	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [18]	4
20	20	Cut	Post-hole	Post-hole	3
21	20	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [20]	3
22	22	Cut	Post-hole	Post-hole	3
23	22	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [22]	3
24	24	Cut	Pit	Pit	3
25	24	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [24]	3
26	26	Cut	Pit	Elongated Pit	3
27	26	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [26]	3
28	28	Cut	Ditch	Small Ditch	3
29	28	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [28]	3
30	30	Cut	Ditch	Small Ditch	3

31	30	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [30]	3
32	32	Cut	Post-hole	Post-hole	3
33	33	Cut	Post-hole	Post-hole	2
34	33	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [33]	2
35	35	Cut	Post-hole	Post-hole	2
36	35	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [35]	2
37	37	Cut	Ditch	Small Ditch	2
38	37	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [37]	2
39	39	Cut	Ditch	Small Ditch	2
40	39	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [39]	2
41	41	Cut	Post-hole	Post-hole	2
42	41	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [41]	2
43	32	Deposit	Fill	Fill of [32]	3
44	N/A	Deposit	Layer	Recent 'crush'	Whole Site
45	N/A	Deposit	Layer	Made-ground	Whole Site
46	N/A	Deposit	Layer	'diesel' soil	Whole Site
47	N/A	Deposit	Layer	'dirty' mixed natural clay	Whole Site
48	N/A	Deposit	Layer	Clean natural clay	Whole Site
49	1	Deposit	Fill	Upper fill of pit [1]	2

12 APPENDIX 3: WORKED FLINT

Context	Feature	Shape	Length (mm)	Breadth (mm)	Thickness (mm)	Weight (g)	Colour	Cortex	Description
38	Fill	Flake	47	30	13	14.8	Translucent grey	Worn nodular cortex	Moderately burnt flint flake. The dorsal side is characterised by two negative flake scars with some patina, parallel to these a patch of worn nodular cortex remains.
38	Fill	Flake	26	21	6	3.3	Dark grey with courser, lighter grey mottling	Nodular	Flint flake with the dorsal side consisting of one negative flake scar and a small patch of cortex at the distal end.
2	Pit	Flake	25	36	10	5.7	Translucent black, dark grey	Nodular	Flint flake with the dorsal side consisting of a negative flake scar, a small patch of cortex on the left edge, and battering and damage at the proximal end. The latter possibly suggesting the piece flaked off of a hammer stone.
2	Pit	Natural					Off white, grey	-	Heavily patinated, thermally fractured piece of flint.
21	-	Natural					Dark grey with courser, lighter grey mottling	Worn nodular cortex	
19	-	Natural					Partly translucent, dark grey with courser, lighter grey mottling	Nodular	
2	Pit	Natural					Dark red	Worn nodular cortex	Thermally fractured, natural flint.

13 APPENDIX 4: PREHISTORIC POTTERY

context	Feature	Feature type	TRENCH	sample	SF	vess #	no of vess	fab	F2	dsc	qty	WT	SPOT DATE
2	1	Pit	2					QF	F	U	24	25	earlier Iron Age
2	1	Pit	2					QF	F	U	14	224	earlier Iron Age
2	1	Pit	2					F1	F	U	7	133	earlier Iron Age
2	1	Pit	2					F1	F	U	1	9	earlier Iron Age
2	1	Pit	2					F1	F	B	1	10	earlier Iron Age
2	1	Pit	2					Qffine	Q	U	3	5	earlier Iron Age
2	1	Pit	2		1	1	1	Qffine	Q	PP	8	118	earlier Iron Age
2	1	Pit	2	1				QF	F	U	4	6	earlier Iron Age
2	1	Pit	2	3		2	1	F1	F	R	1	8	earlier Iron Age
17	16	Posthole	4					QF	F	U	3	7	earlier Iron Age
19	18	Posthole	4					QF	F	U	1	3	earlier Iron Age
21	20	Posthole	3					QF	F	U	1	24	earlier Iron Age
21	20	Posthole	3					Qffine	F	U	1	35	earlier Iron Age
29	28	Ditch	3					QF	F	U	1	4	earlier Iron Age
29	28	Ditch	3					F1	F	U	3	8	earlier Iron Age
38	37	Ditch	2					F1	F	U	9	81	earlier Iron Age
38	37	Ditch	2			3	1	Qffine	Q	R	2	4	earlier Iron Age
38	37	Ditch	2	2				Qffine	Q	U	8	11	earlier Iron Age

14 APPENDIX 5: ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESIDUES

Sample No.	1	2	3
Context No.	2	38	1
Phase	1	37	1
Volume of bulk (liters)	4	4	1
Volume of flot (milliliters)	1	1.5	NONE
Method of processing	F	F	F
HEAVY RESIDUE			
Charcoal			
Charcoal >4 mm			1
Charcoal 2-4 mm			1
Charcoal <2 mm			
Bone			
Large animal bone	1		1
Small animal bone		1	
Cultural artefacts			
Pottery	1	1	
FLOT RESIDUE			
Charcoal			
Charcoal >4 mm	1		
Charcoal 2-4 mm	2	2	
Charcoal <2 mm	3	3	
Frag. of ID size	<5	X	
Seeds			
<i>Chenopodium album</i>	Fat-hen	1	
<i>Rubus</i> sp.	Brambles		1
Other plant macrofossils			
Roots/tubers (undiff.)	1		
Molluscs			
<i>Candidula</i> sp.	1		
<i>Vallonia</i> sp.		1	
Juveniles (no ID)	1	1	
Broken shell	1	1	

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

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OASIS ID: preconst1-296379

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Evaluation at 7 High Street Balsham
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 7 High Street, Balsham Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 5881 5060) from the 31st August to the 4th September 2017. The archaeological work was commissioned by Joseph Mulhare of Hill Residential in response to a planning condition attached to the construction of a new residential development with associated access and facilities. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the proposed development area. Features of Earlier Iron Age date, including post-holes and small ditches were identified within Trench 2, 3 and at the eastern end of Trench 4. These were likely to be linked with a small settlement, possibly a farmstead and appeared to be broadly contemporary with the settlement evidence recorded on the CHER to the south-east at Hay Close, Balsham (MCB17783). Several structures, including walls and drains of 19th-century and 20th-century date were recorded in Trench 4, adjacent to Balsham High Street. A building constructed of 'Cambridge' yellow brick appeared to have replaced a red-brick building dated from 1825 to 1925 with an associated chalk-block lined drain. There were no surviving traces of a smithy which was thought to have existed at the north end of the site, or of associated metal-working
Project dates	Start: 31-08-2017 End: 04-09-2017
Previous/future work	No / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	ECB5129 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 1 - Industrial
Monument type	POST-HOLES Early Iron Age
Monument type	PITS Early Iron Age
Monument type	WALLS Post Medieval
Monument type	WALLS Modern

Monument type	PITS Uncertain
Monument type	DITCHES Early Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Early Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Early Iron Age
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Housing estate
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Between deposition of an application and determination

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE BALSHAM land at 7 High Street Balsham
Postcode	CB21 4DJ
Study area	0.8 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 5881 5060 52.130407042907 0.320439381115 52 07 49 N 000 19 13 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	Min: 112m Max: 114m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	PCA
Project brief originator	Cambridge HET
Project design originator	PCA Central
Project director/manager	Peter Crawley
Project supervisor	Peter Crawley
Type of sponsor/funding body	Hill Partnerships Ltd
Name of sponsor/funding body	Hill Partnerships Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store
----------------------------	---

Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	CCC County Archaeology Store
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	CCC County Archaeology Store
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Drawing","Plan","Report","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Evaluation of 7 High Street Balsham
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Peter Crawley
Other bibliographic details	R13020
Date	2017
Issuer or publisher	PCA
Place of issue or publication	Pampisford
Description	Grey Literature
Entered by	Peter Crawley (pcrawley@pre-construct)
Entered on	21 September 2017

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