

**LAND AT 32C–34A NEWGATE  
STREET, DODDINGTON,  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

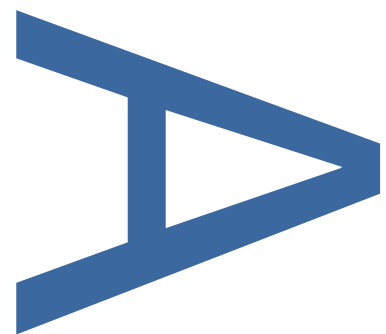
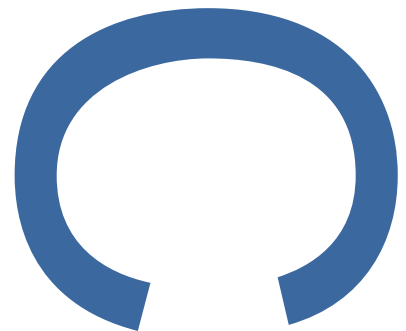
**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
EVALUATION**

**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:  
FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:  
F/YR16/0930/F**

**PCA REPORT NO: R13330**

**SITE CODE: ECB5421**



**PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY**

LAND AT 32C–34A NEWGATE STREET,  
DODDINGTON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH  
EVALUATION

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd	
Project Number	K5570
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## **Land at 32C–34A Newgate Street, Doddington, Cambridgeshire:**

### **An Archaeological Evaluation**

**Local Planning Authority:** Fenland District Council

**Planning Reference:** F/YR16/0930/F

**Central National Grid Reference:** NGR TL 3951 9034

**Site Code:** ECB5421

**Report No.** R13330

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The evaluation identified a series of north-west to south-east linear features, some of which would have served as drainage ditches. A few examples consisted of lines of rectangular pits, a phenomenon that is often observed in the Fenland. These have previously been interpreted as marling pits, created in order to mix the excavated clay geology with the peaty topsoil, to consolidate and 'weigh-down' the soil and control its pH. In common with the other examples observed in the region, the examples at Doddington are of post-medieval date.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 A programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land to the rear of 32C-34A Newgate Street, Doddington, Cambridgeshire, PE15 0SR (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 3951 9034) on the 9th and 10th of July 2018 (Figure 1; Plate 1).
- 1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by Ian Gowler Consulting on behalf of Mr C. Webb in response to an archaeological planning condition attached to the proposed development of three detached residential properties with associated access, parking and detached garages (Planning Reference: F/YR16/0930/F). This condition was attached to the development due to its location in an area of known archaeological potential.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Tom Woolhouse of PCA (Woolhouse 2018) in response to a Brief for archaeological evaluation issued by Gemma Stewart (Stewart 2018) 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 A total of three 1.8m wide evaluation trenches (c. 26.5, 21.5 & 27.5m long) totalling 135.9 sq. m of trenches were excavated and recorded (Figure 2). The WSI originally called for three 1.8 x 25m trenches, positioned on the footprints of the proposed new buildings. The positions and lengths of these trenches were slightly adjusted due to the presence of on-site constraints such as power and sewer lines, but the sample provided by the trenches remains approximately 5% of the overall development area.
- 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 the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Store .

## **2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

### **2.1 Geology**

2.2 The site is located on West Walton Formation and Ampthill Clay Formation geology (British Geographical Survey 2018), present during the course of the evaluation as (102), a light bluey-grey/mid-brownish-grey banded clay with rare gravel inclusions.

2.3 The geology was sealed by a 'subsoil' (101), a mottled mid- to light grey/ mid-brown silty clay which was heavily disturbed and may in fact represent the mixing of the topsoil and geological deposits by mechanical action as a result of post-medieval to modern agriculture, as opposed to an actual discrete soil horizon. In the cases of the majority of the features, this layer was stratigraphically earlier.

2.4 This was in turn sealed by the topsoil (100), a dark brown/ black clayey silt, which contained common desiccated peat.

### **2.5 Topography**

2.6 The site is located at an elevation of approximately 0–1m OD and slopes down gently to the south-west towards the former fen edge. The palaeo-environment of the site is briefly described below (Section 3).

### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Doddington is located in the Cambridgeshire Fenland. Prior to large-scale drainage, which took place from the early 17th century onwards, the Fens were an area of low-lying wetland. The few areas of higher ground formed dry 'islands' in the marsh and, as such, were foci for settlement and other activity. Doddington lies at the southern end of the large fen island which is also occupied by March and Wimblington and, until about AD 1700, it was the main settlement on the island. It rises to a maximum elevation of approximately 10m OD. The present site is located on the south-western edge of the island, at an elevation of approximately 0.00-2.00m OD.
- 3.2 Based on the projections of fen development included in the Fenland Survey, the present site would have been dry land around 250m north of the fen edge during the Bronze Age, but would have lain within 'Hoofen' by the medieval period (Hall 1992, 55-61, figs. 33-4). In later prehistory there would have been a number of streams south of the site, draining westwards into what was then the main course of the River Great Ouse, on the west side of March 'island'. Although predominantly peat fen, marine flooding reached the area at times during the later prehistoric period, creating a brackish water environment and depositing marine clays and silts (*ibid.*, 55).
- 3.3 There are relatively few recorded prehistoric sites and finds in Doddington, though struck flints were recovered from gravels close to the Benwick Road, on the west side of the village, during the Fenland Survey (Hall 1992, 56). Finds of an Early Bronze Age Beaker vessel (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) no. 03748), flint knife (CHER 08671), and Late Bronze Age bronze socketed axe (CHER 08261) have also been made in the parish, but their precise provenances are unknown. This scarcity is very likely to be a reflection of limited archaeological investigation rather than a 'genuine' absence of prehistoric activity, given the prominence of the fen island in the landscape. Roman greyware pottery and other finds have been recovered from an area of dark soil around 900m west of the site (*ibid.*; CHER 10888). Another Roman site lies further south-west at Primrose Hill (*ibid.*).

- 3.4 The existing settlement at Doddington probably originated in the Anglo-Saxon period. Archaeological evidence surrounding the site is dominated by remains of medieval cultivation (ridge and furrow), visible as cropmarks (e.g. CHER 13006 (to the north-west) and 24268 (to the south-east)). These may mask earlier archaeological deposits, as on the eastern side of the village where evidence of Bronze Age occupation (CHER 08261 and 4585) and Roman settlement (CHER 05896 and 12793) have been discovered.
- 3.5 A trial trench evaluation in 2014 on the opposite side of Newgate Street, 200m north of the site, found no significant archaeological features or finds (CHER ECB4300).

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 General**

- 4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation comprised three 1.8m x c. 25m trial trenches, totalling 135.9m<sup>2</sup>. These were distributed evenly across the site in order to provide a representative (c. 5.5%) sample of the c. 0.25ha development area and to cover the footprints of the proposed new buildings.

### **4.2 Excavation methodology**

- 4.2.1 Ground reduction during the evaluation was carried out using a 7 ton 180° wheeled mechanical excavator (Plate 2). Topsoil and other overburden deposits were removed in spits down to the level of the undisturbed natural geological deposits, where potential archaeological features could be observed and recorded. The majority of the features were partially visible cutting through the disturbed subsoil layer; however, given the late post-medieval to modern date of these features the level was machined down to the natural deposits, in order to expose any archaeological features of earlier date.
- 4.2.2 Exposed surfaces were cleaned by trowel and hoe as appropriate and all further excavation was undertaken manually using hand tools.

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

- 4.3.1 The limits of excavations, heights above Ordnance Datum (m OD) and the locations of archaeological features and interventions were recorded using a Leica GS014 GPS rover unit with RTK differential correction, giving three-dimensional accuracy of 20mm or better.
- 4.3.2 Deposits or the removal of deposits judged by the excavating archaeologist to constitute individual events were each assigned a unique record number (often referred to within British archaeology as ‘context numbers’) and recorded on 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]. Where more than one slot was excavated through an



individual feature, each intervention was assigned additional numbers for the cutting event and for the deposits it contained (these deposits within cut features being referred to here as 'fills'). Where possible, slots into linear features which continued in other trenches were grouped and given group names, i.e. 'DITCH 1' etc. The record numbers assigned to cuts, deposits and groups are entirely arbitrary and in no way reflect the chronological order in which events took place. All features and deposits excavated during the evaluation are listed in Appendix 2. Artefacts recovered during excavation were assigned to the record number of the deposit from which they were retrieved.

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

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

#### **4.4 Sampling Strategy**

4.4.1 Discrete features were half-sectioned, photographed and recorded by a cross-section scaled drawing at an appropriate scale (either 1:10 or 1:20).

4.4.2 Linear features were investigated by means of regularly-spaced slots. Where visible and practicable, trench sections of features were recorded in order to show the stratigraphic relationships between features and the overburden deposits. Where this occurred these were recorded as part of the GPS survey and noted on the relevant context sheets.

#### **4.5 Environmental Sampling**

4.5.1 Due to the post-medieval and modern date of the features on the site, as well as the high level of modern intrusion into the archaeological levels, no bulk samples were taken to extract and identify micro- and macro-botanical remains.

#### **4.6 Storage and Curation of the Archive**

- 4.6.1 The CHER has been contacted to obtain an event number prior to the commencement of the project. All paperwork created on site (context forms and plans etc.), paperwork created during post-excavation analysis, as well as this report and the OASIS data collection form are marked with this number. The Event Number also serves as the unique Site Code for the site.
- 4.6.2 Following the transfer of the title, the complete project archive will be transferred to the ownership of the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store for long term deposition. A copy of this report will accompany the archive when it is deposited.
- 4.6.3 The project archive will be compiled in accordance with the guidelines contained in Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-Term Storage (UKIC 1990) and Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections (Museum and Galleries Commission 1992).

## 5 QUANTIFICATION OF ARCHIVE

### 5.1 Paper Archive

Context register sheets	2
Context sheets	34
Plan registers	0
Plans at 1:50	0
Plans at 1:20	0
Plans at 1:10	0
Plans at 1:5	0
Section register sheets	1
Sections at 1:10 & 1:20	14
Trench record sheets	3
Photo register sheets	2
Small finds register sheets	0
Environmental register sheets	0

### 5.2 Digital Archive

Digital photos	80
GPS survey files	1
Digital plans	1
GIS project	0
Access database	1

### 5.3 Physical Archive

Struck flint	0
Burnt flint	0
Pottery	12
Ceramic building material (CBM)	1
Glass	0
Briquetage	0
Small Finds	0
Slag	0
Animal bone	0
Shell	0
Environmental bulk samples (10 litre buckets)	0
Monolith samples	0
Other samples (specify)	0
Black and white films	0
Colour slides	0

## **6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS BY TRENCH**

### **6.1 Introduction**

6.1.1 The trenches are described below in numerical order, with technical data tabulated (Appendix 3). Features and deposits are first split into feature type, and then described in numerical cut order. Archaeological features and deposits were sealed by the topsoil and subsoil, unless otherwise stated. The principal result of the fieldwork was the identification of a series of ditches and pits, the full extents of which could not be defined within the excavated area. Small assemblages of datable artefactual material were recovered from all but six of the features, and consisted of pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), glass, metalwork and animal bone. These assemblages indicate that the features date to the late 18th–19th centuries.

### **6.2 Trench 1**

6.2.1 Trench 1 (Plate 3) contained three ditches, all of which were aligned approximately north-west to south-east and continued out of the trench in both directions.

6.2.2 Datable material recovered from the features was limited, being confined to pottery and undiagnostic iron fragments, recovered from ditch slots [104] and [110]. These assemblages were of medieval and 19th-century date, respectively, although the single medieval potsherd from [104], a sherd of Essex/ East Anglian redware, is considered to be residual in view of the 18th-/ 19th-century date of the identical ditches in this and the other trenches.

6.2.3 Ditch [104] (DITCH 6) was located centrally within the trench and was aligned north-west to south-east, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was relatively narrow and shallow, measuring c. 0.82m wide by 0.14m deep. It contained a single fill (103), a dark brown/black clayey silt which contained a single residual sherd of East Anglian sandy orange ware pottery, dating to AD 1200–1550. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.

6.2.4 Ditch [106] (DITCH 5) (Plate 4, Figure 3, Section 101) was located at the north-west end of the trench and appeared to be aligned north-west to south-

east, extending beyond the limits of excavation to the west, east and north. The exposed part of the feature was narrow and shallow, measuring c. 0.42m+ wide by 0.25m deep. It contained a single fill (105), a dark black/grey clayey silt which contained no finds. The feature was sealed by the subsoil.

- 6.2.5 Ditch [110] (DITCH 1) was located towards the south-east end of the trench and was aligned north-west to south-east, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was relatively narrow and shallow, measuring c. 0.72m wide by 0.14m deep. It contained a single fill (109), a light to mid-brownish-grey silty clay which contained a small assemblage of Yellow Ware pottery, dating to AD 1820–1900. Based on common alignment, size and profile, Ditch [110] is considered to be the same feature as Ditch [122] in Trench 2. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.

### **6.3 Trench 2**

- 6.3.1 Trench 2 (Plate 5) contained four ditches and four pits, the latter forming two 'pit alignments', all of which were aligned approximately north-west to south-east and continued out of the trench in both directions.
- 6.3.2 Datable material recovered from the features was limited, being confined to pottery, ceramic building material and clay tobacco pipe, recovered from ditch slots [112], [114] and Pit [132]. These assemblages are all of post-medieval date.
- 6.3.3 Ditch [112] (DITCH 7) (Figure 3, Section 104) was located near the south-west end of the trench and was aligned north-west to south-east, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was relatively narrow and shallow, measuring c. 0.90m wide by 0.17m deep. It contained a single fill (111), a dark brown/ black clayey silt which contained a small assemblage of Refined Whiteware pottery, some with transfer printed decoration, dating to AD 1820–1900. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.
- 6.3.4 Ditch [114] (DITCH 4) (Plate 6, Figure 3, Section 109) was located near the south-west end of the trench and was aligned north-west to south-east,

extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was relatively narrow and shallow, measuring c. 0.80m wide by 0.39m deep. It contained a single fill (113), a dark brown/black clayey silt which contained a small assemblage of Glazed Red Earthenware pottery, dating to AD 1550-1900, as well as a single fragment each of ceramic building material and clay tobacco pipe stem. Based on common alignment and profile, Ditch [114] is considered to be the same feature as Ditch [108] in Trench 3. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.

- 6.3.5 Ditch [120] (DITCH 2) was located near the north-east end of the trench and was aligned north-west to south-east, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was relatively narrow and shallow, measuring c. 0.82m wide by 0.27m deep. It contained a single fill (119), a dark brownish-grey silty clay which contained no finds. Based on common alignment and profile, Ditch [120] is considered to be the same feature as Ditch [124] in Trench 3. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.
- 6.3.6 Ditch [122] (DITCH 1) was located near the north-east end of the trench and was aligned north-west to south-east, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was relatively narrow and shallow, measuring c. 0.70m wide by 0.10m deep. It contained a single fill (121), a dark brown/black clayey silt which contained no finds. Based on common alignment and profile, Ditch [122] is considered to be the same feature as Ditch [110] in Trench 1. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.
- 6.3.7 Pit [116] (PIT ALIGNMENT 2) (Plate 7) was located to the south-west within the trench and was not fully visible in plan (c. 0.72m wide by 0.14m deep), extending beyond the limit of excavation to the south-east. It had a single fill (115), a dark brown/black clayey silt which contained no finds. The feature formed part of a possible pit alignment with Pit [132] in Trench 2 and Pit [126] in Trench 3. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.

- 6.3.8 Pit [118] (PIT ALIGNMENT 1) was located centrally within the trench and was not fully visible in plan (c. 0.79m wide), extending beyond the limit of excavation to the south-east. It had a single fill (117), a dark brown/black clayey silt which contained no finds. The feature formed a part of a possible pit alignment with Pit [134] in Trench 2 and Pit [130] in Trench 3. The feature was not excavated. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.
- 6.3.9 Pit [132] (PIT ALIGNMENT 2) (Plate 7) was located towards the south-west end of the trench and was not fully visible in plan (c. 0.73m wide by 0.15m deep), extending beyond the limit of excavation to the north-west. It had a single fill (131), a dark brown/black clayey silt which contained a small assemblage of Creamware pottery with slip decoration, dating to AD 1775–1830. The feature formed part of a possible pit alignment with Pit [116] in Trench 2 and Pit [126] in Trench 3. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.
- 6.3.10 Pit [134] (PIT ALIGNMENT 1) (Figure 3, Section 113) was located centrally within the trench and was not fully visible in plan (c. 0.90m wide by 0.26m deep), extending beyond the limit of excavation to the north-west. It had a single fill (133), a dark brownish-grey clayey silt which contained no finds. The feature formed a part of a possible pit alignment with Pit [118] in Trench 2 and Pit [130] in Trench 3. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.

#### **6.4 Trench 3**

- 6.4.1 Trench 3 (Plate 8) contained three ditches and two elongated pits, forming two pit alignments, all of which were aligned approximately north-west to south-east and continued out of the trench in both directions.
- 6.4.2 Datable material recovered from the features was limited, being confined to pottery, clay tobacco pipe stem and undiagnostic iron fragments, recovered from ditch slots [108] and [124] and Pits [126] and [130]. These assemblages are of post-medieval date.
- 6.4.3 Ditch [108] (DITCH 4) was located at the south-east end of the trench and

was aligned north-west to south-east, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was relatively narrow and shallow, measuring c. 0.74m wide by 0.18m deep. It contained a single fill (107), a dark brown/black clayey silt which contained a small assemblage of Pearlware pottery with polychrome painted decoration, dating to D 1790–1820. Based on common alignment and profile, Ditch [108] is considered to be the same feature as Ditch [114] in Trench 2. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.

6.4.4 Ditch [124] (DITCH 2) was located towards the north-west end of the trench and was aligned north-west to south-east, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was relatively narrow and shallow, measuring c. 0.96m wide by 0.24m deep. It contained a single fill (123), a dark brown/black clayey silt which contained a small assemblage of Refined Whiteware pottery, dating to AD 1780–1900, as well as two fragments of corroded iron. Based on common alignment and profile, Ditch [124] is considered to be the same feature as Ditch [120] in Trench 2. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.

6.4.5 Ditch [128] (DITCH 8) was located centrally within the trench and was aligned north-west to south-east, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was relatively narrow and shallow, measuring c. 0.88m wide by 0.07m deep. It contained a single fill (127), a dark brownish-grey clayey silt which contained no finds. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench. No continuation of the ditch was identified in Trench 2.

6.4.6 Pit [126] (PIT ALIGNMENT 2) was located towards the south-east end of the trench and was aligned north-west to south-east, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was relatively narrow and shallow, measuring 0.76m wide by 0.14m deep. It had a single fill (125), a dark brownish-grey clayey silt which contained a small assemblage of Refined Whiteware pottery, some of which had transfer printed decoration, dating to AD 1780–1900. Although resembling a ditch in appearance, based on its common alignment with Pits [116] and [132], the feature is considered likely to



actually be a pit, with the trench only covering the middle segment of the feature. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.

- 6.4.7 Pit [130] (PIT ALIGNMENT 1) (Plate 9) was located towards the north-west end of the trench and was aligned north-west to south-east, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It had a single fill (129), a dark brownish-grey clayey silt which contained a small assemblage of Creamware, Glazed Red Earthenware and Staffordshire-type Combed Slipware pottery, dating to AD 1740–1800, as well as two fragments of clay tobacco pipe stem. Although resembling a ditch in plan, upon excavation the feature had the form of two rectangular pits, located end to end, measuring c. 1.22m wide by 0.32m deep, which had been excavated and backfilled contemporaneously. The feature formed a part of a pit alignment with Pits [118] and [134] in Trench 2. The feature was visible cutting through the subsoil in the edge of the trench.

## 7 FINDS

### 7.1 Post-medieval and modern pottery

By Chris Jarrett

Context	Cut	Trench	Pottery types (codes)	Spot date
103	104	1	East Anglian/Essex unsourced sandy orange ware	1200–1550
107	108	3	pearlware with under-glaze polychrome-painted decoration in 'earth' colours (PEAR EARTH)	1790–1820
109	110	1	yellow ware (YELL)	1820–1900
111	112	2	refined whiteware (REFW), refined whiteware with under-glaze transfer-printed decoration (TPW), yellow ware with slip decoration (YELL SLIP)	1820–1900
113	114	2	glazed red earthenware (GRE)	1550–1900
123	124	3	refined whiteware (REFW)	1805–1900
125	126	3	refined whiteware with under-glaze transfer-printed decoration (TPW)	1780–1900
129	130	3	creamware (CREA), glazed red earthenware (GRE), Staffordshire-type combed slipware (STSL)	1740–1800
131	132	2	creamware with slip decoration (CREA SLIP)	1775–1830

Table 1: Post-Roman pottery spot dates

## **8 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **8.1 Post-medieval (AD 1550–1900)**

- 8.1.1 The remains found on the site comprise ditches and pit alignments of post-medieval date, which were present in all the trenches. All of the features were on the same alignment, suggesting that they relate to a single continuous phase of agricultural land use. The roughly north-west to south-east alignment the features exhibit is also shared by the back edge of the modern plot boundary, which appears to have been retained from at least 1885–1900, when it was visible on the Ordnance Survey map of the period at the south-western edge of Doddington village.
- 8.1.2 Due to the location of the site, on the edge of the March fen island, at only 0–1.00m OD, the primary function of the ditches present on the site would have been drainage. The number of ditches in such a small area, all belonging to a relatively restricted time period, together with their ephemeral size, would also indicate that they are unlikely to have functioned primarily as boundaries. It is possible that the ditches were also created to extract clay for marling, as was perhaps the case for the pit alignments.
- 8.1.3 The pit alignments present on the site were of a type that is commonly observed in the fenland (Hall and Coles 1993, 157), for example at Camel Road, Littleport (Bush 2014), Ramsey Heights, Ramsey (Morgan-Shelbourne 2015), and at Manea Colony (Brittain 2017), and would have in part served a similar secondary drainage function to the ditches. However, the primary function of pit alignments such as these was not to facilitate drainage, but to extract the natural clay. Essentially, the peaty soils of the fenland, drained and exposed, are prone to becoming desiccated and friable, which in turn makes them vulnerable to erosion by wind (the 'Fen Blow'). The clay and subsoil extracted from the pits can then be spread over the ground surface, which has the effect of weighing the soil down, giving it a higher water retention capacity and in some cases altering the overall pH of the soil. This intensive use of pit alignments in this way, as is the case at Doddington, is mainly a post-medieval practice, starting after the main drainage of the fens from the late 18th and early 19th century.

- 8.1.4 The dating of the activity present at the site relies on the presence of small assemblages of diagnostic pottery, giving a post-medieval date to the features, perhaps extending from the late 16th century to the end of the nineteenth. However, the stratigraphic position of many of the features, cutting through the disturbed 'subsoil' layer, indicates that the majority of these features are likely to date to the latter portion of this range. The morphology of the pits (probably machine or steam-plough-excavated, as they were straight sided and rectangular, with slightly irregular 'dragged' undercutting edges) is also instructive, as earlier, hand dug examples can sometimes be less regular and more rounded in plan, although this is not always a reliable guide. The majority of the pottery from the features is of late 18th to early 19th century date, further increasing the likelihood that the features actually belong to a specific phase of land use at this time.
- 8.1.5 Although the site is located near to the Neolithic to Bronze Age fen edge (Hall 1992) to the south, no evidence of archaeological activity of earlier periods was identified during the course of the evaluation. Although unfortunate, this is likely simply a reflection of the small size of the site area. The lack of medieval archaeology (apart from one residual potsherd) encountered is more easily explained, as by this period the site had probably been encroached upon by the rising level of the fen.
- 8.1.6 The results are in keeping with the known archaeology of the Doddington area.
- 8.1.7 Any decisions about the need for further archaeological mitigation at the site must be made in conjunction with Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team, in their role as archaeological advisors to Fenland District Council. However, it is suggested that the site's archaeological resource has been sufficiently characterised and understood by the trial trench evaluation. Although of some local interest, the remains of post-medieval field drainage and marling pits are of limited significance to wider regional archaeological research agendas. Figure 4 shows the archaeological remains mapped against the development proposals.

## **9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Ian Gowler for commissioning the work and Mr C. Webb for generously funding the project and for his kind assistance during the fieldwork. PCA are grateful to Kerry Hopper and Gemma Stewart of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team for monitoring the work on behalf of Fenland District Council planning. The project was managed for PCA by Tom Woolhouse and was supervised by Lawrence Morgan-Shelbourne. The author would like to thank Cleve Roberts for his hard work on site. Figures accompanying this report were prepared by PCA's CAD Department.

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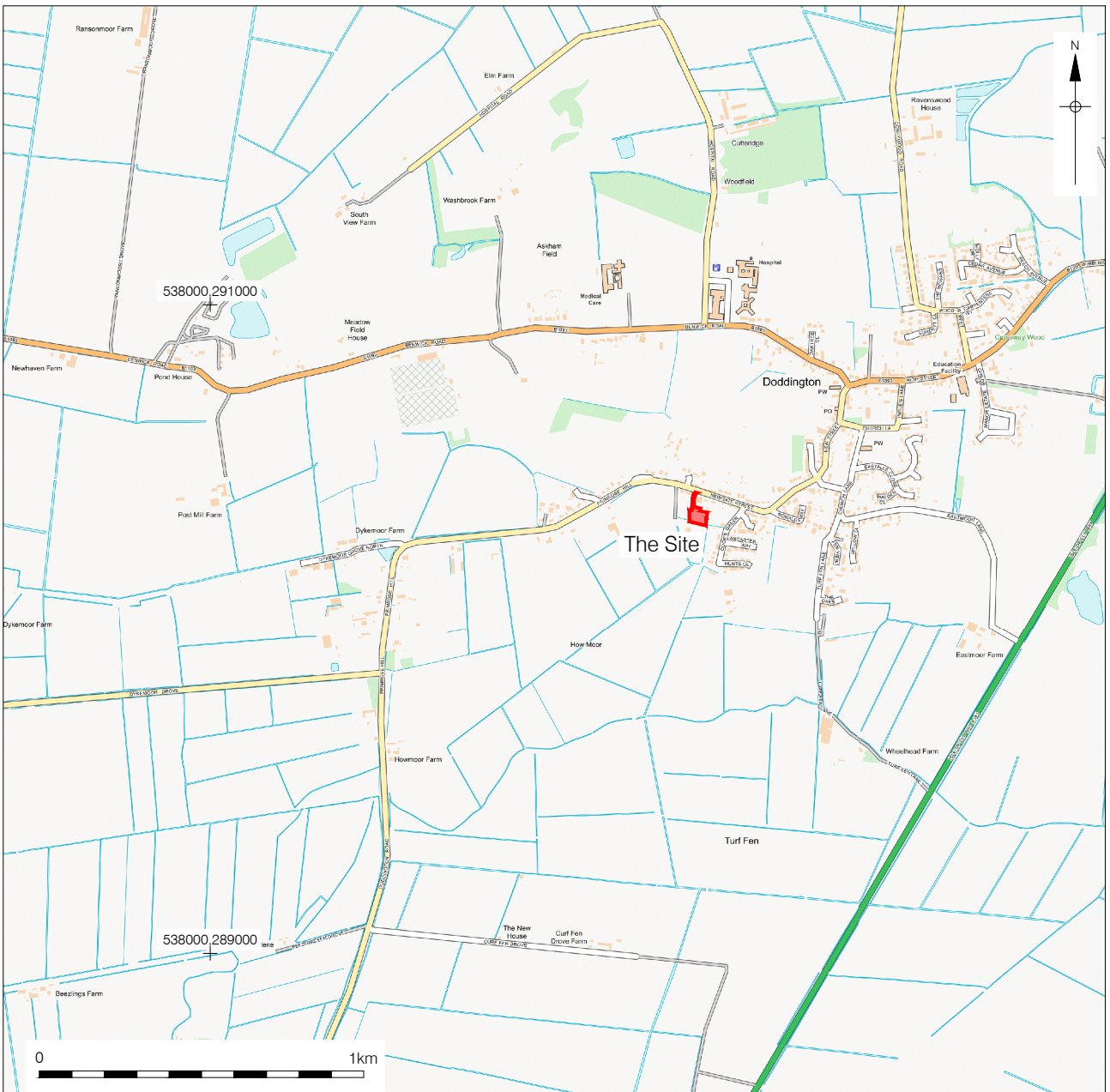
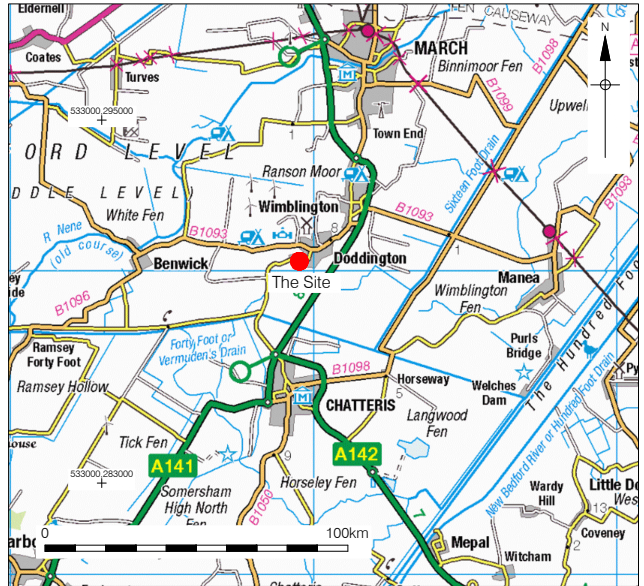
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1) British Geological Survey, 2018. Geology of Britain Viewer <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html?location=IP9%203DG>.

Accessed 18/07/2018





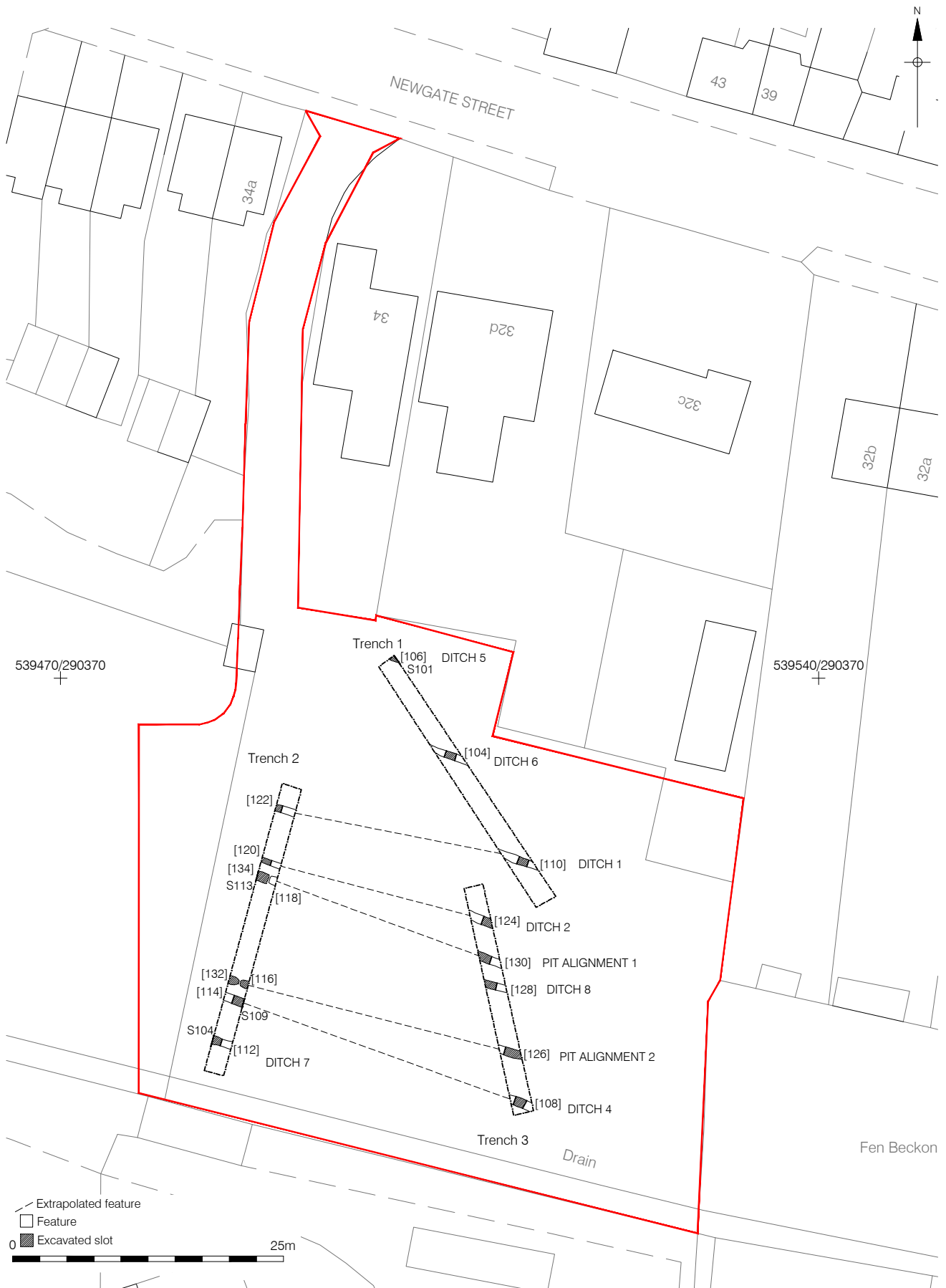
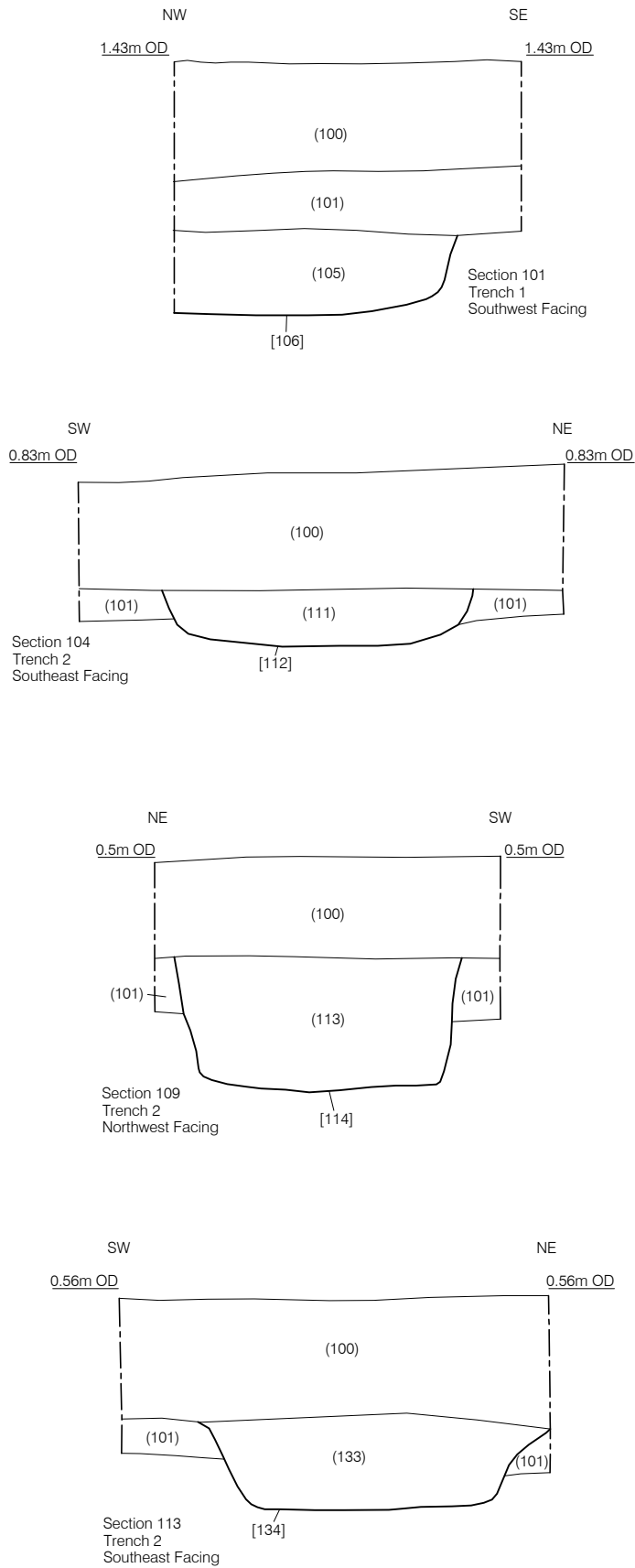


Figure 2  
Detailed Trench Location  
1:500 at A4



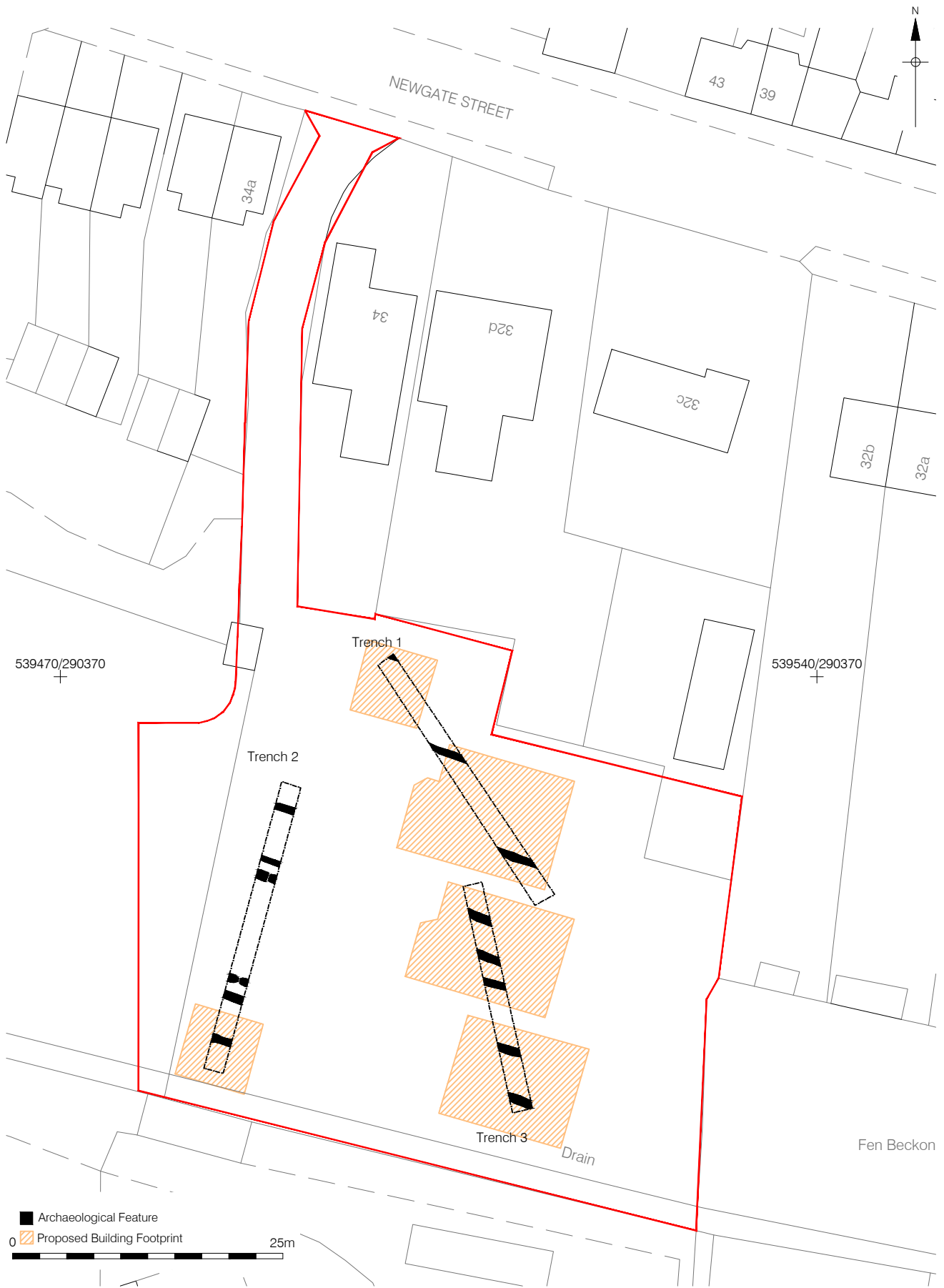


Figure 4  
 Plan of trenches with Building Footprint overlay  
 1:500 at A4

## 11 APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: The site, view south-east



Plate 2: The site, machining, view north-west





Plate 3: Trench 1, view south-east





Plate 4: Ditch [106], Trench 1, view north-east





Plate 5: Trench 2, view north-east





Plate 6: Ditch [114], Trench 2, view south-east





Plate 7: Pit [116], Pit [132] in foreground, Trench 2, view south-east





Plate 8: Trench 3, view north-west





Plate 9: Pit [130], Trench 3, view north-west

## 12 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Cut	Trench	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Feature Group	Period
100	0	0	Layer	Topsoil	0	0	0.35	Moderate, dark blackish-brown clayey silt with abundant dessicated peat		
101	0	0	Layer	Subsoil	0	0	0.48	Moderate to stiff, mottled mid-to light grey/mid-brown silty clay with frequent dessicated peat		
102	0	0	Layer	Natural	0	0	0.5	Very stiff, light blueish-grey/mid-brownish-grey clay with rare gravel		
103	104	1	Fill	Ditch	1	0.82	0.14	Moderate, dark brownish-black clayey silt with occasional dessicated peat	DITCH 6	Post-medieval
104	104	1	Cut	Ditch	1	0.82	0.14	Linear in plan, steep to subvertical sides, flat base	DITCH 6	Post-medieval
105	106	1	Fill	Ditch	1	0.42	0.25	Moderate, dark blackish-grey clayey silt with occasional dessicated peat	DITCH 5	Post-medieval
106	106	1	Cut	Ditch	1	0.42	0.25	Linear in plan, steep to subvertical sides, concave base	DITCH 5	Post-medieval
107	108	3	Fill	Ditch	1	0.74	0.18	Moderate, dark brownish-black clayey silt with occasional dessicated peat	DITCH 4	Post-medieval
108	108	3	Cut	Ditch	1	0.74	0.18	Linear in plan, steep to subvertical sides, irregular base	DITCH 4	Post-medieval
109	110	1	Fill	Ditch	1	0.72	0.14	Stiff, Light to mid-brownish-grey silty clay with abundant dessicated peat	DITCH 1	Post-medieval
110	110	1	Cut	Ditch	1	0.72	0.14	Linear in plan, moderate	DITCH 1	Post-

								sides, concave base		medieval
111	112	2	Fill	Ditch	1	0.9	0.17	Moderate, dark brownish-black clayey silt with occasional dessicated peat	DITCH 7	Post-medieval
112	112	2	Cut	Ditch	1	0.9	0.17	Linear in plan, subvertical to steep sides, flat base	DITCH 7	Post-medieval
113	114	2	Fill	Ditch	1	0.8	0.39	Moderate, dark brownish-black clayey silt with occasional dessicated peat	DITCH 4	Post-medieval
114	114	2	Cut	Ditch	1	0.8	0.39	Linear in plan, steep to subvertical sides, flat base	DITCH 4	Post-medieval
115	116	2	Fill	Pit	0.7	0.72	0.14	Moderate, dark brownish-black clayey silt with occasional dessicated peat	PIT ALIGNMENT 2	Post-medieval
116	116	2	Cut	Pit	0.7	0.72	0.14	Subrectangular? In plan, steep to subvertical sides, flat base	PIT ALIGNMENT 2	Post-medieval
117	118	2	Fill	Pit	0.54	0.79	0	Moderate, dark brownish-black clayey silt with occasional dessicated peat	PIT ALIGNMENT 1	Post-medieval
118	118	2	Cut	Pit	0.54	0.79	0	Subrectangular? In plan, not excavated	PIT ALIGNMENT 1	Post-medieval
119	120	2	Fill	Ditch	1	0.82	0.27	Stiff, dark brownish-grey silty clay with abundant dessicated peat	DITCH 2	Post-medieval
120	120	2	Cut	Ditch	1	0.82	0.27	Linear in plan, steep to moderate sides, flat base	DITCH 2	Post-medieval
121	122	2	Fill	Ditch	1	0.7	0.1	Moderate, dark brownish-black clayey silt with occasional dessicated peat	DITCH 1	Post-medieval
122	122	2	Cut	Ditch	1	0.7	0.1	Linear in plan, steep to subvertical sides, flat base	DITCH 1	Post-medieval
123	124	3	Fill	Ditch	1	0.96	0.24	Moderate, dark brownish-black clayey silt with	DITCH 2	Post-medieval

								occasional dessicated peat		
124	124	3	Cut	Ditch	1	0.96	0.24	Linear in plan, steep sides, flat base	DITCH 2	Post-medieval
125	126	3	Fill	Pit	1	0.76	0.14	Stiff, dark brownish-grey clayey silt with abundant dessicated peat	PIT ALIGNMENT 2	Post-medieval
126	126	3	Cut	Pit	1	0.76	0.14	Linear in plan, moderate sides, flat base	PIT ALIGNMENT 2	Post-medieval
127	128	3	Fill	Ditch	1	0.88	0.07	Stiff, dark brownish-grey clayey silt with abundant dessicated peat	DITCH 8	Post-medieval
128	128	3	Cut	Ditch	1	0.88	0.07	Linear in plan, gentle sides, concave base	DITCH 8	Post-medieval
129	130	3	Fill	Pit	1	1.22	0.32	Stiff, dark brownish-grey clayey silt with abundant dessicated peat	PIT ALIGNMENT 1	Post-medieval
130	130	3	Cut	Pit	1	1.22	0.32	Linear in plan, steep to subvertical sides, flat base	PIT ALIGNMENT 1	Post-medieval
131	132	2	Fill	Pit	0.93	0.73	0.15	Moderate, dark brownish-black clayey silt with occasional dessicated peat	PIT ALIGNMENT 2	Post-medieval
132	132	2	Cut	Pit	0.93	0.73	0.15	Suboval in plan, steep to moderate sides, flat base	PIT ALIGNMENT 2	Post-medieval
133	134	2	Fill	Pit	1.01	0.9	0.26	Stiff, dark brownish-grey clayey silt with abundant dessicated peat	PIT ALIGNMENT 1	Post-medieval
134	134	2	Cut	Pit	1.01	0.9	0.26	Subrectangular in plan, steep sides, concave base	PIT ALIGNMENT 1	Post-medieval

### 13 APPENDIX 3: TRENCH TABLES

TRENCH 1	Figure 2	Plate 3	
Trench Alignment: NW–SE	Length: 26.54m	Level of Natural (m OD): 0.88–1.00	
Deposit	Context No.	Maximum depth below ground level (m)	
		NW End	SE End
Topsoil	(100)	0.31	0.32
Subsoil	(101)	0.48	0.42
Natural Clay	(102)	0.50+	0.43+
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Trench 1 was located in the northern half of the site area.</p> <p>The trench contained three ditches, all of which were aligned approximately north-west to south-east.</p> <p>Datable material recovered from the features was limited, being confined to pottery and iron recovered from ditch slots [104] and [110]. These assemblages are of medieval and post-medieval date, although the medieval potsherd is considered to be residual.</p>			

TRENCH 2	Figure 2	Plate 5	
Trench Alignment: NE–SW	Length: 27.47m	Level of Natural (m OD): 0.50–0.70	
Deposit	Context No.	Maximum depth below ground level (m)	
		NE End	SW End
Topsoil	(100)	0.34	0.35
Subsoil	(101)	0.44	0.38
Natural Clay	(102)	0.45+	0.39+
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Trench 2 was located in the western half of the site area.</p> <p>The trench contained four ditches and four pits, the latter arranged into two 'pit alignments', all of which were aligned approximately north-west to south-east.</p> <p>Datable material recovered from the features was limited, being confined to pottery, ceramic building material and clay tobacco pipe, recovered from ditch slots [112], [114] and Pit [132]. These assemblages are of post-medieval date.</p>			

TRENCH 3	Figure 2	Plate 8	
Trench Alignment: NW–SE	Length: 21.43m	Level of Natural (m OD): 0.73–0.86	
Deposit	Context No.	Maximum depth below ground level (m)	

		NW End	SE End
Topsoil	(100)	0.32	0.35
Subsoil	(101)	0.40	0.42
Natural Clay	(102)	0.41+	0.45+
<b>Summary</b> Trench 3 was located in the eastern half of the site area.  The trench contained four ditches and two pits, the latter arranged into two pit alignments, all of which were aligned approximately north-west to south-east.  Datable material recovered from the features was limited, being confined to pottery, clay tobacco pipe stems and iron, recovered from ditch slots [108] and [124] and Pits [126] and [130]. These assemblages are of post-medieval date.			



## 14 APPENDIX 4: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-322791

### Project details

Project name Land at 32C-34A Newgate Street, Doddington, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation

1.1 Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land to the rear of 32C-34A Newgate Street, Doddington, Cambridgeshire, PE15 0SR on the 9th and 10th of July 2018. The evaluation identified a series of north-west to south-east linear features, some of which would have served as drainage ditches.

Short description A few examples consisted of lines of rectangular pits, a phenomenon of the project that is often observed in the fenland. These have previously been interpreted as marling pits, created in order to mix the excavated clay geology with the peaty topsoil, to consolidate and 'weigh-down' the soil and control its pH. In common with the other examples observed in the region, the examples at Doddington are of a post-medieval date.

Project dates Start: 09-07-2018 End: 10-07-2018

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference ECB 5421 - Sitecode codes

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Other 5 - Garden

Monument type DITCH Post Medieval

Monument type DITCH Modern

Monument type PIT Post Medieval

Monument type PIT Modern

Significant Finds POTTERY Post Medieval

Significant Finds POTTERY Modern

Significant Finds CBM Post Medieval

Significant Finds CBM Modern

Significant Finds GLASS Modern

Significant Finds METALWORK Modern

Significant Finds CLAY PIPE Post Medieval

Methods & techniques "Targeted Trenches"

Development type Rural residential

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

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

Project location

Country England

Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE FENLAND DODDINGTON Land at 32C-34A  
Newgate Street, Doddington, Cambridgeshire

Postcode PE15 0SR

Study area 136 Square metres

Site coordinates TL 3951 9034 52.492715006301 0.055125005626 52 29 33 N 000 03  
18 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 0.5m Max: 1m

Project creators

Name of Organisation PCA

Project brief originator Gemma Stewart

Project design originator Tom Woolhouse

Project director/manager Tom Woolhouse

Project supervisor Lawrence Morgan-Shelbourne

Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Name of sponsor/funding body Ian Gowler Consulting on behalf of Mr C. Webb

Project archives

Physical Archive  
recipient Cambridgeshire County Council

Physical Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","Glass","Metal"

Digital Archive  
recipient Cambridgeshire County Council

Digital Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","Glass","Metal"

Digital Media  
available "Database","Text"

Paper Archive  
recipient Cambridgeshire County Council

Paper Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","Glass","Metal"

Paper Media  
available "Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey","Unpublished Text"

Project  
bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Land at 32C-34A Newgate Street, Doddington, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation

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