

**LAND AT STATION ROAD, FOXTON,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE:**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY: SOUTH
CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

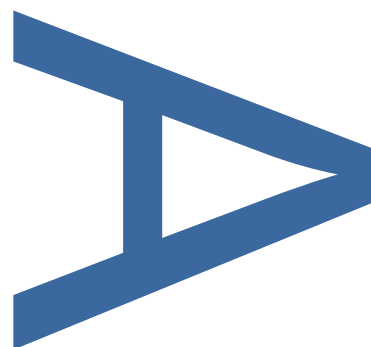
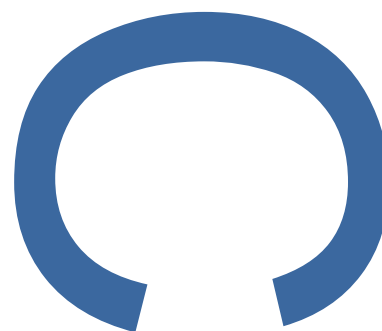
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PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

Land at Station Road, Foxton, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation

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ABSTRACT

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology at Station Road, Foxton (NGR TL4088 4841) between 15th and 19th November 2018. The work was commissioned by Hill Residential Ltd. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the site prior to its redevelopment.

The evaluation identified four ditches, on varying alignments, as well as part of a ring-ditch. The slight variations in ditch alignments suggest the potential for different periods, or at least differing phases of activity, are represented. The general lack of recovered finds evidence suggest that the site is away from settlement, not within the settlement 'core', but the presence of the ring-ditch (in Trench 5) may contradict this assertion.

The ring-ditch, identified in Trench 5, was not associated with rich finds assemblages. Therefore, it has the potential for being either a smaller barrow or a roundhouse. However, due to its dimensions the likelihood is that it is a roundhouse, on the peripheries of a main settlement core. The ditches present on the site are all on slightly differing alignments which point to the presence of different phases of activity with readjustments and reinforcement of boundaries occurring over time. Some of these ditches are likely related to the ring-ditch representing an associated boundary system.

Two natural features, likely representing tree throws, were also identified on the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A programme of archaeological evaluation trial trenching was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on Land at Station Road, Foxton, Cambridgeshire, CB22 6SA (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 4088 4841) from the 15th to 19th November 2018 (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by Hill Residential Ltd in response to an archaeological planning condition attached to the redevelopment of the land (Planning Reference: S/2148/16/OL). This was due to the archaeological significance of the proposed development area (PDA). The work was undertaken in line with National Planning Policy Framework 2018, Section 16 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by PCA (Carlyle 2018) in response to a Brief for archaeological evaluation issued by Kasia Gdaniec (Gdaniec 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 Initially six evaluation trenches, totalling 150m, were excavated, this was increased following advice from CCC HET. In total seven evaluation trenches, totalling 187.5m of trenching, were excavated and recorded (Figure 2).
- 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 Archive Facility.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Geology

2.2 The superficial deposits are River Terrace Deposits- sand and gravel. These deposits were formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (British Geological Survey (BGS); Website 1).

2.3 The underlying bedrock geology is of the West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation- chalk. This sedimentary bedrock was formed approximately 94 – 101 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period (BGS; Website 1).

2.4 Topography

2.5 The site, which covers an area of c. 0.85ha, is located on the western edge of the village of Foxton. Foxton is located c.10km south-west of Cambridge. Foxton Brook is located c.1.2km to the west of the site and the River Cam is located c.1.5km to the north.

2.6 The site is bordered to the east by properties fronting on to Station Road, commercial premises to the south, the grounds of the Villiers Park Educational trust to the north and open pasture to the west. A belt of mature trees split the site roughly in two, running alongside this band of trees were three water pipes.

2.7 Topographically, the site is situated on relatively flat ground at the southern edge of the floodplain of the River Cam, c.15m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). To the south of the site the ground rises gradually towards Chalk Hill and West Hill, which overlook the village from the south, at c.34m aOD.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The information below has been summarised from the Historic Environment Record (HER), the Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) conducted for the site (Harrison 2016) and any relevant 'grey literature'.

Prehistoric

3.1.1 A Neolithic pit and a prehistoric ditch were identified during work on the Foxton Recreation Ground c.500m to the south-east of the PDA (CB 15568). Further Neolithic pits have been recorded in the area during the construction of the Duxford gas pipeline c.900m to the west of the site (CB 14690).

3.1.2 An evaluation at Shepreth Road (ECB 4396; House 2015) c.250m south-west of the site identified Bronze Age barrow which was associated with a Late Bronze Age settlement which consisted of ditches and clusters of pits and postholes.

3.1.3 Further Bronze Age ring ditches have been identified on aerial photographs c.500m south-west of the site (CB 18631) and geophysical surveys (MCB 17776 and CB 15638) c.800m south-west of the site.

Iron Age

3.1.4 Two Iron Age roundhouses have been recorded in a geophysical survey carried out on school playing fields, c.300m south of the site (MCB 19183). Further investigations, c.800m to the west, uncovered Iron Age pits, one of which contained a cremation (CB 14689).

3.1.5 An evaluation to the south of Shepreth Road (ECB 5395; Lloyd-Smith 2018), c.500m south-west of the site, identified evidence for Iron Age settlement. This consisted of a complex of enclosures, likely representing settlement, with associated field boundaries and stock enclosures.

3.1.6 An excavation carried out near Barrington Road (HER 04209a), c.700m to the north, identified further Iron Age activity.

Roman

3.1.7 Metal finds have been recovered during metal detecting, c.350m to the south-

west, on a site which was subsequently subject to a geophysical survey. However, no archaeologically significant features were identified.

3.1.8 Roman activity has been recorded, c.800m to the west near Foxton Brook, including a substantial settlement and cemetery (CB 14689). This was associated with the Iron Age settlement, indicating continuity into the Roman period.

3.1.9 A series of cropmarks, relating to a complex of enclosures (HER 08626) and a trackway (HER 08629), were identified c.500m to the north and north-west of the site. Further casual metal finds have been recovered from the area during metal detecting (HER 11564 and 17717).

Saxon

3.1.10 Saxon inhumations have been recorded, c.200m to the northeast (HER 03996), c.500m to the north (HER 03989), and c.700m to the north of the study site. The southern-most inhumations seem to mark the southern edge of the burials as no further inhumations have been found in excavations to the south.

3.1.11 Metal detecting c.350m southwest of the study site recorded a single strap fitting of possible Saxon date (HER 10266a). Further metal detecting c.500m to the southwest of the study site has recovered two Saxon brooches. These are likely to represent casual loss rather than occupation.

3.1.12 No evidence of settlement remains dating to the Saxon period has been uncovered within the search area, although the settlement at Foxton is mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086).

Medieval

3.1.13 The medieval settlement developed around St. Lawrence's Church which originally dates from the 12th century lying c.300m south of the study site. The medieval core of the village was likely to have been located along High Street during this period, c.300m south of the study site, near to St. Lawrence's Church.

Post-medieval and modern

- 3.1.14 The closest records of post-medieval or modern date are two listed buildings (18 and 22 Station Road) located c.100m to the east of the study site.
- 3.1.15 Within c.250m of the study site are a Pigeon house (HER 10417; 125m southeast), a farm (HER 04125; 200m east) and a Dovecote at Herod's Farm (HER 10418; c.230m southeast). These entries suggest the developed area of post-medieval Foxton was similar to that of the medieval period, although development was now extending north along Station Road.

Cartographic Resources

- 3.1.16 The earliest mapping that shows the study site in any detail is the Inclosure map of 1830. Both show the study site as located within land owned by John Beradyshe and allocated to William Hurrell. The western edge of the study site is located within a thin strip of land owned by William Hurrell and incorporated within the larger field to the east. The study site is surrounded by agricultural fields as well as a dense area of woodland to the north. A footpath aligned north to south and running from Foxton to the south, runs through the study site and across William Hurrell's field. Development within Foxton is limited to properties off High Street and four properties off the eastern side of Station Road (labelled Stockers Lane Road).
- 3.1.17 The 1839 tithe map depicts the study site as part of one large field, with little change elsewhere.
- 3.1.18 The first edition OS map dated to 1881 depicts a new building to the north of the study site, which is labelled Foxton Hall. The field, in which the study site is located, is depicted as containing vegetation that matches the alignment of earlier field divisions.
- 3.1.19 Subsequent OS maps depict the study site as much the same, although the vegetation is no longer shown. The 1938 OS map depicts the study site as being located in a large single field. To the east of the study site properties have been constructed along Station Road. To the south, Wildbores Farm has been removed and replaced by the Burlington Press. By the 1980's further development has infilled the entire of Station Road. By the early 21st century

the Burlington Press buildings have been expanded to include land immediately south of the study.

Aerial Photograph Survey

3.1.20 The aerial photographic survey undertaken for the site (Cox 2016) has identified extensive use of the area around Foxton in the past. It records remains of likely prehistoric and Roman date including settlements, trackways, boundaries, fields and burial sites within c.1km.

3.1.21 Some residual traces of buried features were tentatively suggested, but the grass and parkland use may not have facilitated their visibility as marks in vegetation.

Geophysical Survey

3.1.22 A geophysical survey was carried out on the site which identified no anomalies of archaeological interest (Galt 2016). Two modern pipes were identified, with areas of magnetic disturbance and ferrous responses of modern origin also present throughout the survey.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 General

- 4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation initially comprised 6 x 25m trial trenches, totalling 150m. These were distributed evenly across the site in order to provide a representative sample of the development area.
- 4.1.2 Following consultation with CCC HET two trenches were extended (Trenches 2a, 5a and 5b) and a further trench excavated (Trench 7) taking the total amount of trenching to 187.5m.

4.2 Excavation methodology

- 4.2.1 Ground reduction during the evaluation was carried out using a 21-ton 360° tracked mechanical excavator. Topsoil and other overburden of low archaeological value was removed in spits down to the level of the undisturbed natural geological deposits where potential archaeological features could be observed and recorded.
- 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 (mOD) 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.
- 4.3.2 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'). 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 and excavation are listed in Appendix 1. 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 which 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). Where finds assemblages were not present, excavated features were extended in order to maximise finds recovery.

4.4.2 Linear features were investigated by means of 1m slots across their lengths. Where stratigraphic relationships between features could not be discerned in plan, relationship slots were excavated and these were recorded as part of the GPS survey and noted on the relevant context sheets.

4.5 Environmental Sampling

4.5.1 A total of 2 bulk samples (generally 20-40 litres in volume) were taken to extract and identify micro- and macro-botanical remains. The aim of this sampling was to investigate the past environment and economy of the site. An additional aim of the sampling was to recover small objects that are not readily recovered by hand-collection, such as metalworking debris and bones of fish and small animals. The samples were taken from sealed deposits.

5 QUANTIFICATION OF ARCHIVE

5.1 Paper Archive

Context register sheets	2
Context sheets	23
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	13
Trench record sheets	7
Photo register sheets	1
Small finds register sheets	0
Environmental register sheets	1

5.2 Digital Archive

Digital photos	180
GPS survey files	3
Digital plans	1
GIS project	0
Access database	1

5.3 Physical Archive

Pottery	3/ 5g
Ceramic building material (CBM)	0
Animal bone	20
Metalwork	1
Environmental bulk samples	2
Environmental bulk samples (10 litre buckets)	4

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 The trenches are described below in numerical order, with trench information and technical data tabulated in Appendix 3. Features are described from north to south or west to east, depending on the alignment of the trench.

6.1.2 The principal result of the fieldwork was the identification of a series of ditches on differing alignments, one being a ring-ditch which could represent a roundhouse or barrow. Very little datable artefactual material was recovered from the features, being limited to two abraded sherds of Roman pottery and fragments of animal bone.

6.2 Trench 1 (Figures 3 and 4)

6.2.1 Trench 1 contained a single undated ditch terminus and a tree throw.

Tree throw [103] (Figure 4) was irregular in plan, with shallow sides and a flattish base. It measured 2.6m in length, 1.3m+ in width and 0.15m in depth. It contained a single fill (104) of pale greyish brown silty sand. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch [110] (Figure 4; Section 108) was a linear terminus in plan aligned north-north-east to south-south-west, extending beyond the southern limits of the trench. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base, measuring 1.16m in width and 0.23m in depth. It contained a single fill (109) of pale greyish brown silty sand. No finds were recovered from this feature.

6.3 Trench 2 (Figure 3)

6.3.1 Trench 2 contained no archaeologically significant features or deposits.

6.4 Trench 3 (Figures 3 and 4)

6.4.1 Trench 3 contained a single ditch.

Ditch [106] (Figure 4; Section 108; Plate 4) was linear in plan aligned east-north-east to west-south-west extending beyond both limits of excavation. It had steep sides and a concave base, measuring 1.51m in width and 0.44m in depth. It contained three fills: a basal fill (112) of mid- to pale greyish brown silty sand, a middle fill (111) of mid- greyish brown silty sand and an upper fill (105) of mid- to dark greyish brown

silty sand which contained seven fragments (0.1g) of animal bone.

6.5 Trench 4 (Figure 3)

6.5.1 Trench 4 contained no archaeologically significant features or deposits.

6.6 Trench 5 (Figures 3 and 5)

6.6.1 Trench 5 contained three ditches, two forming part of a roundhouse or ring-ditch, and a tree throw.

Ring-ditch [121] (Figure 5) was curvilinear in plan aligned north-east to south-west extending beyond both limits of excavation, truncating Tree throw [123]. It had steep sides and a concave base, measuring 0.79m in width and 0.16m in depth. It contained a single fill (120) of mid- orangey brown silty sand. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Tree throw [123] (Figure 5) was irregular in plan extending beyond the northern limit of excavation, and was truncated by Ditch [121]. It had steep sides and an undulating base, measuring 1.5m in diameter and 0.3m in depth. It contained a single fill (122) of mixed yellowish brown and greyish brown silty sand. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ring-ditch [117] (Figure 5; Section 111; Plate 7) was curvilinear in plan aligned east to west extending beyond both limits of excavation. It had steep sides and a concave base, measuring 1.37m in width and 0.4m in depth. It contained a single fill (116) of mid- orangey brown silty sand. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch [115] (Figure 5; Section 110; Plate 8) was linear in plan aligned north-east to south-west extending beyond both limits of excavation. It had steep sides and a concave base, measuring 0.9m in width and 0.3m in depth. It contained a single fill (114) of mid- greyish brown silty sand. No finds were recovered from this feature.

6.7 Trench 6 (Figures 3 and 5)

6.7.1 Trench 6 contained a single ditch terminus.

Ditch [108] (Figure 5; Section 107) was linear in plan aligned east to west extending beyond the western limit of excavation. It had steep sides and a concave base, measuring 0.76m in width and 0.23m in depth. It contained a single fill (107) of dark greyish brown silty sand which contained 13 fragments (0.1g) of animal bone. The environmental sample (<1>) recovered a small number of cereal grains (barley and

wheats).

6.8 Trench 7 (Figures 3 and 5)

6.8.1 Trench 7 contained a single ditch.

Ditch [119] (Figure 5; Section 112) was linear in plan aligned north-east to south-west extending beyond both limits of excavation. It had steep sides and a concave base, measuring 1.15m in width and 0.2m in depth. It contained a single fill (118) of mid-greyish brown silty sand. No finds were recovered from this feature

7 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

7.1 Roman Pottery

By Katie Anderson

7.1.1 Three fragments of Roman pottery were recovered from the site:

(105)- probable Roman, shell tempered body sherd (1 sherd; 2g)

(107)- probable Roman, oxidised sandy ware (2 sherds; 3g)

7.1.2 No further comment can be made due to the size, condition and nature of the fabric.

7.2 Animal Bone

By Ryan Desrosiers

Introduction

7.2.1 The evaluation identified two archaeological features in two trenches which yielded 20 fragments of animal bone. These remains, weighing 0.2g, were comprised of taxa from two taxonomic orders; mammals (Mammalia) and birds (Aves). This section details the assessment of these faunal remains.

Methodology

7.2.2 The recovered animal bone was identified, recorded, and quantified (NISP) to species level whenever possible (Table 1). In the case of unidentifiable fragments, like long bone shaft fragments or vertebral fragments, classification into size classes (e.g. cattle sized/ sheep sized) as per Rielly 2018 was attempted. During the recording of individual elements, additional attributes including, species, bone portion, condition, taphonomy, pathology, or anthropogenic alterations were noted. Attempts were made to refit all possible elements within contexts, with the total number of fragments being additionally noted.

Assemblage Description

7.2.3 20 fragments of animal bone from two features within two trenches were recovered. Various small taxa including house mouse (*Muridae* spp.), a species of vole (*Microtinae* spp.), and a species of small perching bird (*Passeriformes*

spp.), are represented within the Foxton assemblage. After attempting to refit, 20 fragments were further reduced to a total of 18 specimens. Given the relatively small assemblage present, these elements are not statistically significant. All specimens recovered from archaeological features display a relatively good degree of preservation, and do not show any distinct signs of human alteration (e.g. butchery markings or saw marking).

Context	Bird	Small Mammal	Unidentified Mammal	Grand Total
105			7	7
107	4	4	5	13
Grand Total	4	4	12	20

Table 1: Animal bone fragments by context

Discussion

- 7.2.4 Very little can be drawn from the animal bone assemblage recovered from the trial trenching at Foxton.

7.3 Metalwork

By Ruth Prior

- 7.3.1 A single iron object was recovered from the evaluation. It has been fully recorded and a complete listing is provided (Table 2). It has been examined with the assistance of low-level magnification. Overall, the condition of the metalwork is poor. The object is both corroded and truncated.

Iron

- 7.3.2 The elongate iron object is most likely to be the shank of a nail. The shank width is between 6-6.4mm. Although these measurements are affected by the levels of corrosion and concretion, it can be suggested that iron nails of similar dimensions are of a small to medium size and primarily used for joined objects of furniture or boxes. It was found in the fill of Ditch [108].

Discussion

- 7.3.3 The single metal object is un-datable and most likely represents an object that, once broken, was discarded into the ditch.

7.3.4 No further work is recommended for the nail at this stage.

Context	Material	Object	Description	Width (mm)	Length (mm)	Depth (mm)	Weight (g)	Extent
107 [108] <1>	Iron	Nail?	Elongate object with tapering shank that is sub-square in cross-section. It is corroded and truncated at both ends.	6	35.7	6.4	2	Incomplete

Table 2: Metalwork catalogue

7.4 Environmental Assessment

By Kate Turner

Introduction

7.4.1 This report summarises the findings of the rapid assessment of the environmental remains in two bulk soil samples collected during the evaluation. These samples were taken from two ditches (Ditches [106] and [108]), the context information for which is given in Table 3.

7.4.2 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	Cut	Type	Category	Trench	Sample No.	Interpretation
105	106	Fill	Ditch	3	2	Ditch; linear in plan aligned north-east to south-west, with steep sides and a concave base
107	108	Fill	Ditch	6	1	Ditch; linear terminus in plan aligned east to west, with steep sides and a concave base

Table 3: Sample context information

Methodology

- 7.4.3 Two environmental bulk samples, of fourteen and sixteen litres in volume respectively, 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).
- 7.4.4 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

- 7.4.5 For the purposes of this assessment samples will be discussed individually, in order to assess environmental potential. Cultural material collected from the heavy residues has been catalogued and passed to the relevant specialists for further assessment. A full account of the sample contents is given in Appendix 4.

Sample <1>; Ditch [108] Fill (107)

- 7.4.6 Sample <1> was collected from the fill of Ditch [108]. Preservation of environmental remains was mixed in this sample; wood charcoal was recorded in abundance; however, this material was heavily fragmented, and less than ten specimens of a suitable size for species identification (>4 mm in length/width) were reported. A small number of cereal grains, of barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and undifferentiated wheats (*Triticum* sp.), were also identified, along with some indeterminate grains that were too damaged for species to be recognised. Seeds were present in moderate densities; the condition of this material is such however, that these specimens have been interpreted as modern intrusions.
- 7.4.7 A large snail assemblage was extracted from this deposit; a significant

proportion of the shells identified are those of the terrestrial burrowing species *Cecilioides acicula* which, when found in archaeological contexts, is often interpreted as evidence of disturbance. Juvenile specimens and snail eggs were also common, along with a small number of catholic (*Trichia* spp.) and open ground (*Vallonia* spp., *Vertigo pygmaea*) species, amongst others. The bulk of this material is considered to be intrusive.

- 7.4.8 Roots and modern insect remains were also recognised in the flot, along with small animal bone, and metal nails, pottery and mammal bone were found in the residue.

Sample <2>; Ditch [106] Fill (105)

- 7.4.9 Sample <2> was taken from the fill of Ditch [106]. Wood charcoal was again abundant in this context, with over one-hundred specimens observed, the majority of the pieces were however small (<2 mm in length/width), and no sizeable specimens were extracted. Grains of undifferentiated wheat were also reported, as well as several unidentifiable caryopses. Apparently modern seeds were frequently recognised.

- 7.4.10 Terrestrial snail shells were common; whilst the majority of these were of non-native burrowing snails (*Cecilioides acicula*), moderate numbers of the catholic snails *Cochlicopa lubrica* and *Trichia* spp. were identified, with small to moderate amounts of open ground specimens (*Vallonia* sp., *Vertigo* p.) and those common to shady places (*Oxychilus* sp.) and expose areas (*Pupilla* m.) also found. Snail eggs and juveniles were present throughout.

- 7.4.11 Roots, insects and vitreous material were recorded in the flot material, and pottery and animal bone in the residue, in small amounts.

Discussion

- 7.4.12 A rapid assessment of the environmental remains in the samples collected from Station Road, Foxton has established that recovery of ecofacts is generally poor. There is some minimal evidence to suggest that wheat and barley may have been cultivated or consumed locally. However, the concentrations of this material are too low to indicate large scale exploitation and could represent

normal background levels for this type of site. A small proportion of the identified grains were too heavily degraded for species to be identified, likely as a result of high temperature or prolonged combustion. Chaff was absent, which suggests that if cereals are being grown or stored at this site, they are being processed elsewhere. The fragmented wood charcoal found in these deposits is likely to constitute the spent fuel from small scale fires, possibly domestic in nature.

7.4.13 The mollusc assemblage is comprised of species with a variety of ecological niches, including specimen's native to open ground, shady places and dry, exposed areas, as well as several species that are ecologically catholic, and thus found in a wide range of conditions. Based on the nature and preservation of this material, it is likely that the majority of these specimens are modern intrusions. The remaining assemblage is too minimal to make any firm suggestions regarding the environment of the site.

Conclusions

7.4.14 The rapid assessment of the environmental remains in the Station Road bulk samples has shown that preservation of ecofacts is generally poor and is of little diagnostic value.

7.4.15 However, rapid assessment has shown that there is the potential for carbonised archaeobotanical material to be preserved on this site.

7.4.16 Due to the profusion of modern intrusive material, and the potential for bioturbation in these deposits, no further work is suggested on this assemblage.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 General

8.1.1 The evaluation identified features which likely dated to the later prehistoric period. However, the available dating evidence was limited, indeed merely two abraded Roman sherds, which suggests that the site was not within a settlement 'core'. The differing alignments of the ditches suggests the potential for multiple periods, or at least different phases of activity, being represented.

8.2 Prehistoric Ring-ditch

8.2.1 A ring-ditch was identified within the central part of the site (Trench 5) which potentially represents the drip-gully of a roundhouse, or a ring-ditch surrounding a round-barrow. However, the postulated dimensions of the ring-ditch (c.11m in diameter) suggest it is more likely to be a drip-gully. Roundhouses are common throughout the prehistoric (and later) periods. The posited dimensions present here are consistent with other roundhouses identified in the Cambridgeshire region, such as those identified at Herod's Farm (Macaulay 1995), the High Street, Balsham (Revell 2018) and Clay Farm (Philips and Mortimer 2012).

8.2.2 Occupation has been identified throughout Foxton with a number of settlement sites recorded in the vicinity of the site such as adjacent evaluations off Shepreth Road (Lloyd-Smith 2018 and House 2015) to the south-west and at Herod's Farm to the south (Macaulay 1995) with further settlement likely beneath School playing fields c.300m to the south (MCB19183; Archaeological Rheesearch Group 2009). This demonstrates a prevalence for settlement throughout the area, albeit the current site is unlikely to be within any core of occupation.

8.2.3 The presence of cereal grains within a nearby ditch (Ditch [108], Trench 6) may help provide indications that the ring-ditch is a roundhouse. The environmental evidence suggests that wheat and barley may have been cultivated or consumed locally. However, the concentrations were too low to indicate large scale exploitation. No chaff was identified suggesting that any processing was undertaken off-site

8.2.4 However, it may represent a smaller barrow (c.11m in diameter). Barrows have also been identified in the area both in aerial photographic surveys (Cox 2016) as well as in archaeological investigations such as in an adjacent evaluation (House 2015) which identified a barrow, albeit significantly larger at c.24m in diameter, and Manor Farm, Harston (Malim 1994) with two ring-ditches measuring c.19-23m in diameter. Despite these being larger than the example identified on the site, this still attests to the presence of these features within the local landscape.

8.2.5 It cannot be dismissed merely due to its size as smaller barrows have been identified in the area, such as at Hinxton Grange (Jones 2017; c.12-15m), Grinnel Hill, Melbourne c.14m in diameter (CHER 03149) and Edix Hill, Barrington (Malim 1997). The Royal Commission the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) record the average diameter of barrows in Cambridgeshire to be 19m in diameter. However, elsewhere in Britain these averages are significantly lower, such as in Dorset (where more barrows survive) the average drops to 15m (RCHME 1972). This demonstrates that, due to its smaller diameter, this feature may be a barrow and cannot be discounted on size.

8.3 Undated Ditches

8.3.1 The majority of the features found on the site relate to undated ditches. The variations in their alignment would seem to suggest more than one phase of activity is present- they were likely reworked or reinforced over time. These alterations and modifications could be responses to changes in the environment but also relate to changing land-uses (i.e the need for more agricultural land).

8.3.2 Little pottery was recovered from the site to date these features definitively to a known period. This indicates that the activity is on the peripheries of settlement, and not within the settlement 'core', which likely lay further to the south adjacent to Shepreth Road (House 2015 & Lloyd-Smith 2018). Although, the ring-ditch, as discussed above, indicates that there is at least some activity on the site.

8.3.3 Systems of similar field boundary ditches have been excavated in East Anglia, where dateable material has been recovered, they have proved to belong to a range of periods from prehistoric to medieval. Finds tend to be scarce within

field boundary ditches, especially prehistoric ones, but, as at Area T Ravenswood and Martlesham (Jones 2015 and Woolhouse 2014), extrapolation of dated ditch alignments helped provide clarity into dating. The same could be applied here where, broadly, the ditch alignments are on a similar north-east to south-west alignment to those identified at Shepreth Road (Lloyd-Smith 2018 and House 2015). So, given the location near to this Iron Age settlement, the ditches could plausibly also be Iron Age in date. However, it is worth the caveat that these hypotheses are merely represent 'best fit' with no solid dating to confirm.

8.4 Residual Roman Activity (40-400AD)

- 8.4.1 The only dating recovered from the site was Roman in date, likely being residually deposited in earlier features. This could fit with other sites in the area where Iron Age continuity into the Roman period has been identified, such as Herod's Farm (Macaulay 1995) and Shepreth Road (Lloyd-Smith 2018).
- 8.4.2 The artefactual evidence recovered related to residually deposited scraps, but this still attests to the presence of Roman activity in the area.

9 CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1.1 The results of the current site are helps to the bring focus to nearby Iron Age sites, such as the Shepreth Road site (House 2015 and Lloyd-Smith 2018) with this site being within the associated agricultural landscape. However, the presence of a ring-ditch, either barrow or roundhouse, is an intriguing anomaly.
- 9.1.2 The low quantities of later finds indicate that the site is unlikely to be within the main 'foci' of settlement. The evidence uncovered indicating the site away from settlement, although if the ring-ditch proves to be a roundhouse. this will require reassessment. Given the nature of settlement during the prehistoric period features associated with settlement may not have been identified given the spaces between the evaluation trenches.
- 9.1.3 Dating evidence was rare, most features currently being undated, but the likelihood is they date to either the Iron Age (associated with ring-ditch) or Roman periods (due to small amount of pottery). The slight variation in alignments represented on site indicate re-use or re-establishment of these boundaries.
- 9.1.4 The evaluation has revealed evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity. The results are in keeping within the known archaeology of Foxton.

10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

10.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Hill Residential Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. PCA are also grateful to Kasia Gdaniec of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team for monitoring the work on behalf of the Local Planning Authority. The project was managed for PCA by Mark Hinman. The author would like to thank the site team: Valerio Pinna, Rita Pedro, Petra Ivanova, Gareth Morgan and Rory Fisher for their hard work. Figures accompanying this report were prepared by Rosie Scales of PCA's CAD Department.

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1) British Geological Survey (Date Accessed 06/12/2018)

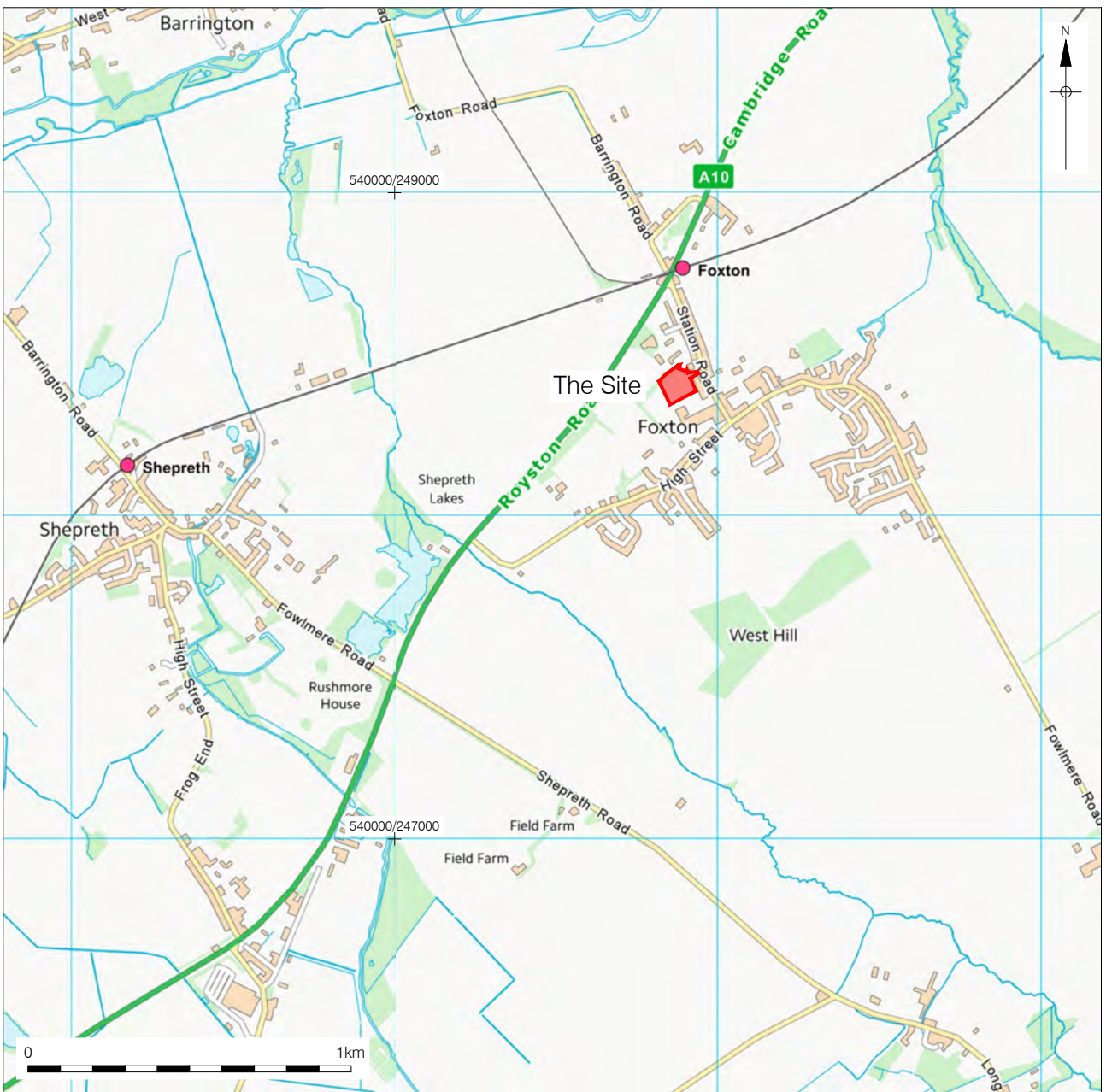
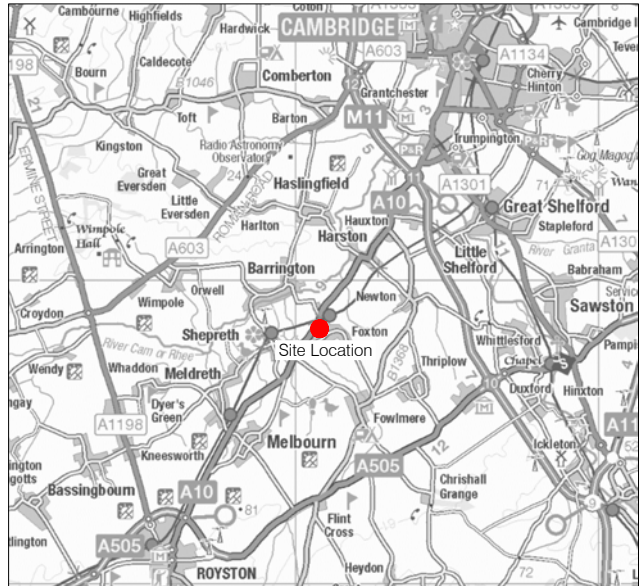
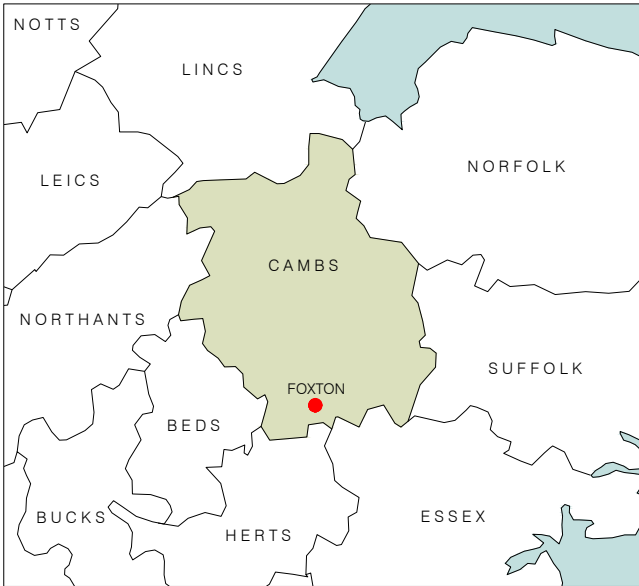
www.bgs.ac.uk

2) Old Maps Online (Date Accessed 06/12/2018)

www.oldmapsonline.org.uk

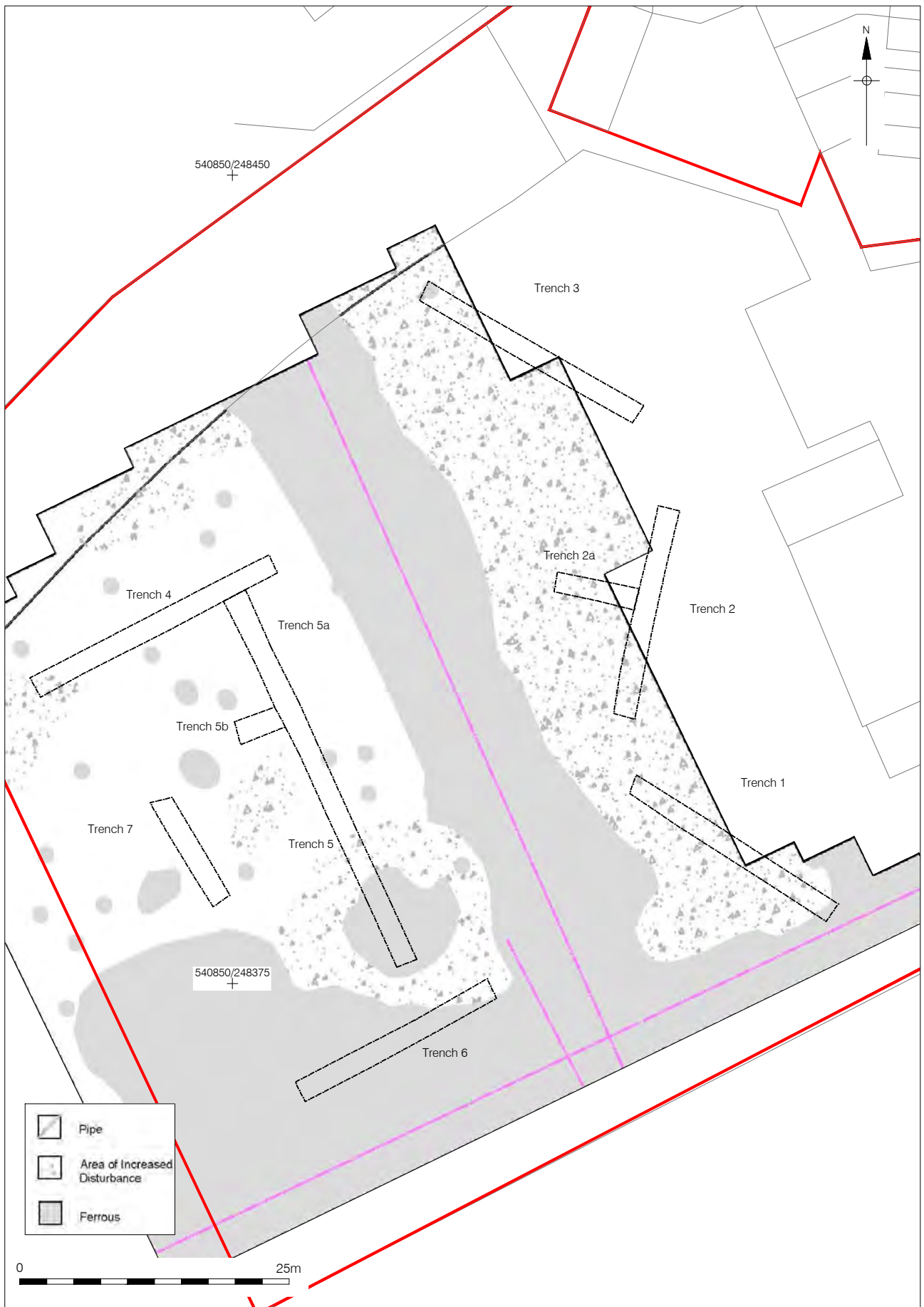
3) British History Online (Date Accessed 06/12/2018)

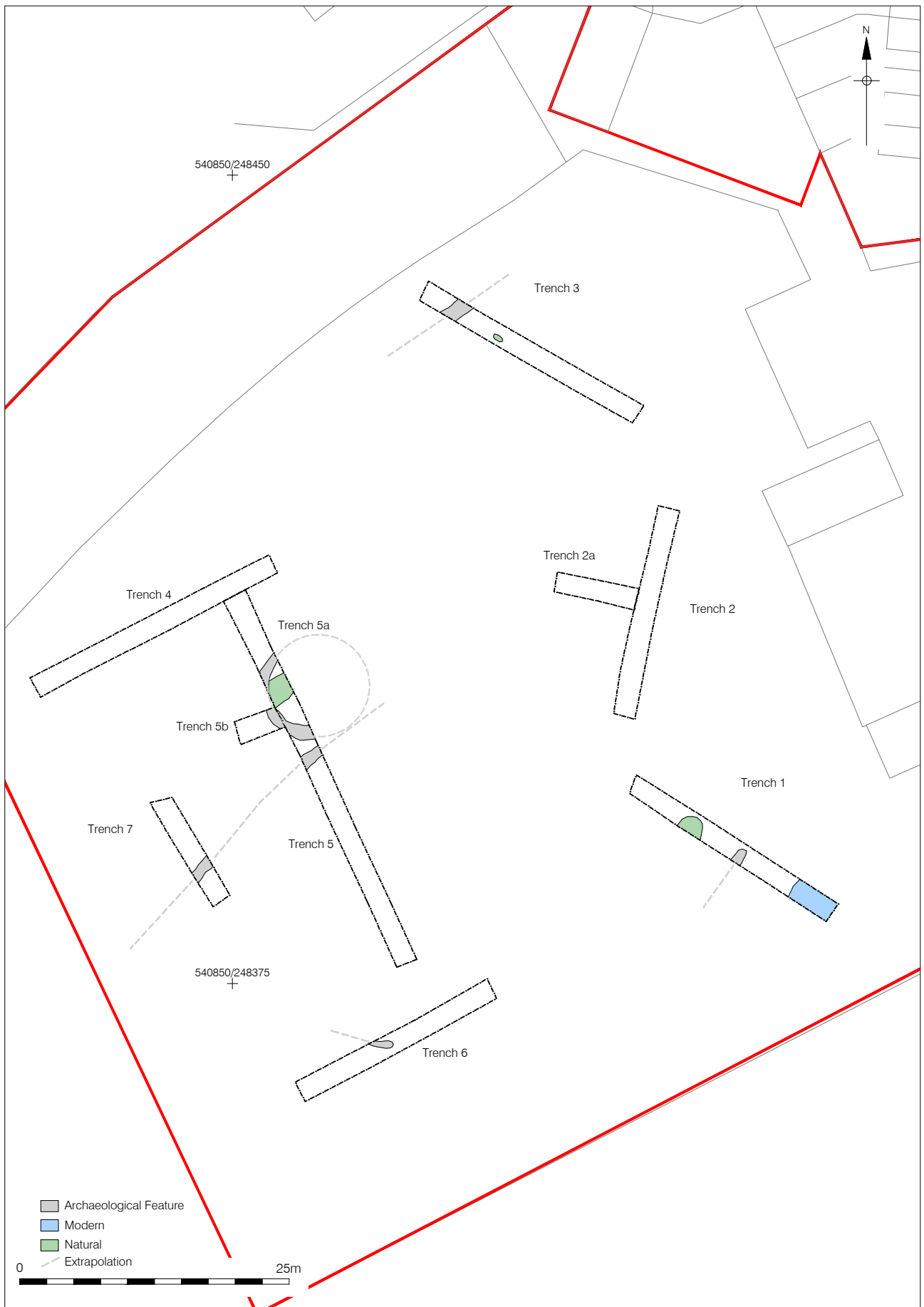
www.british-history.ac.uk

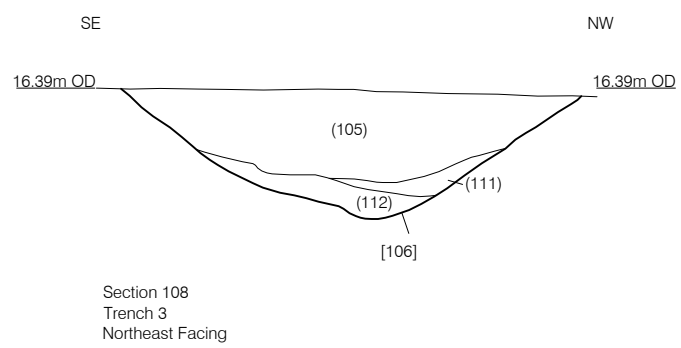
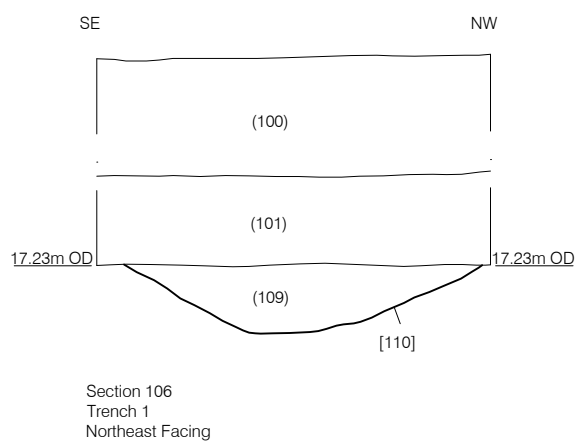
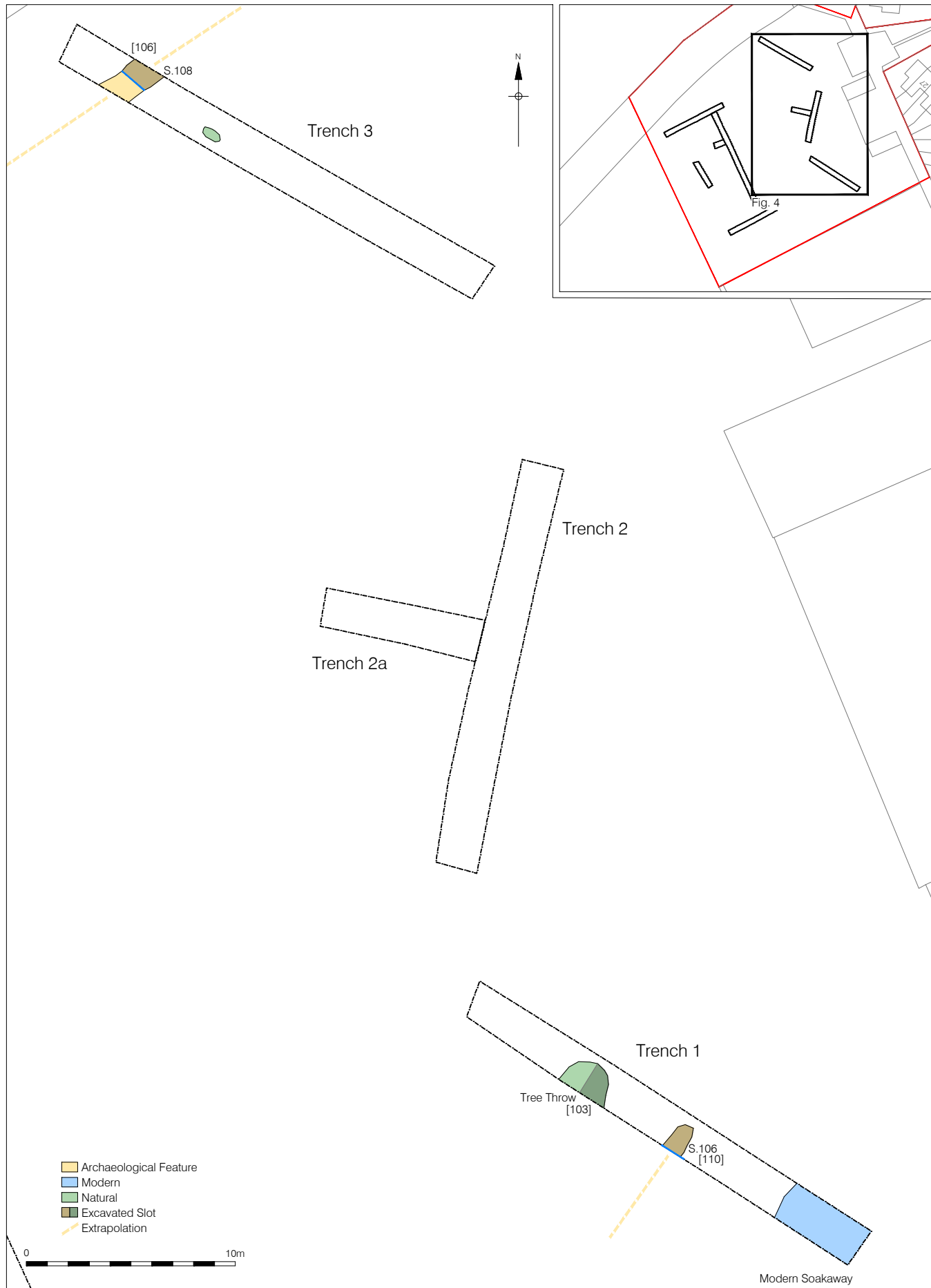


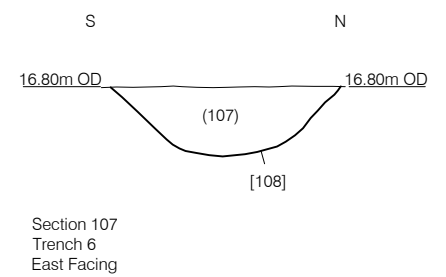
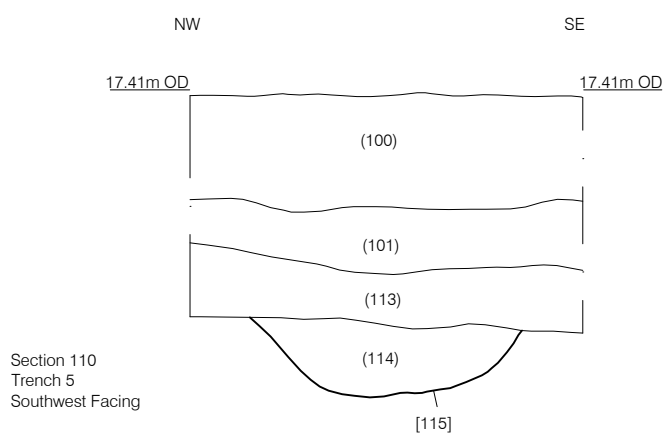
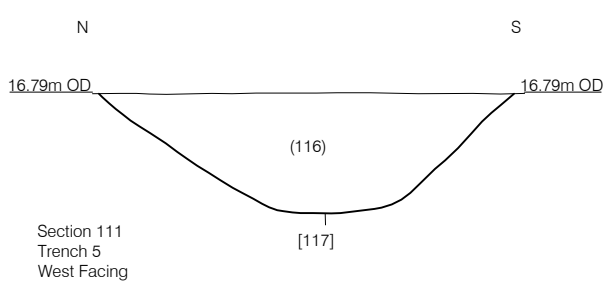
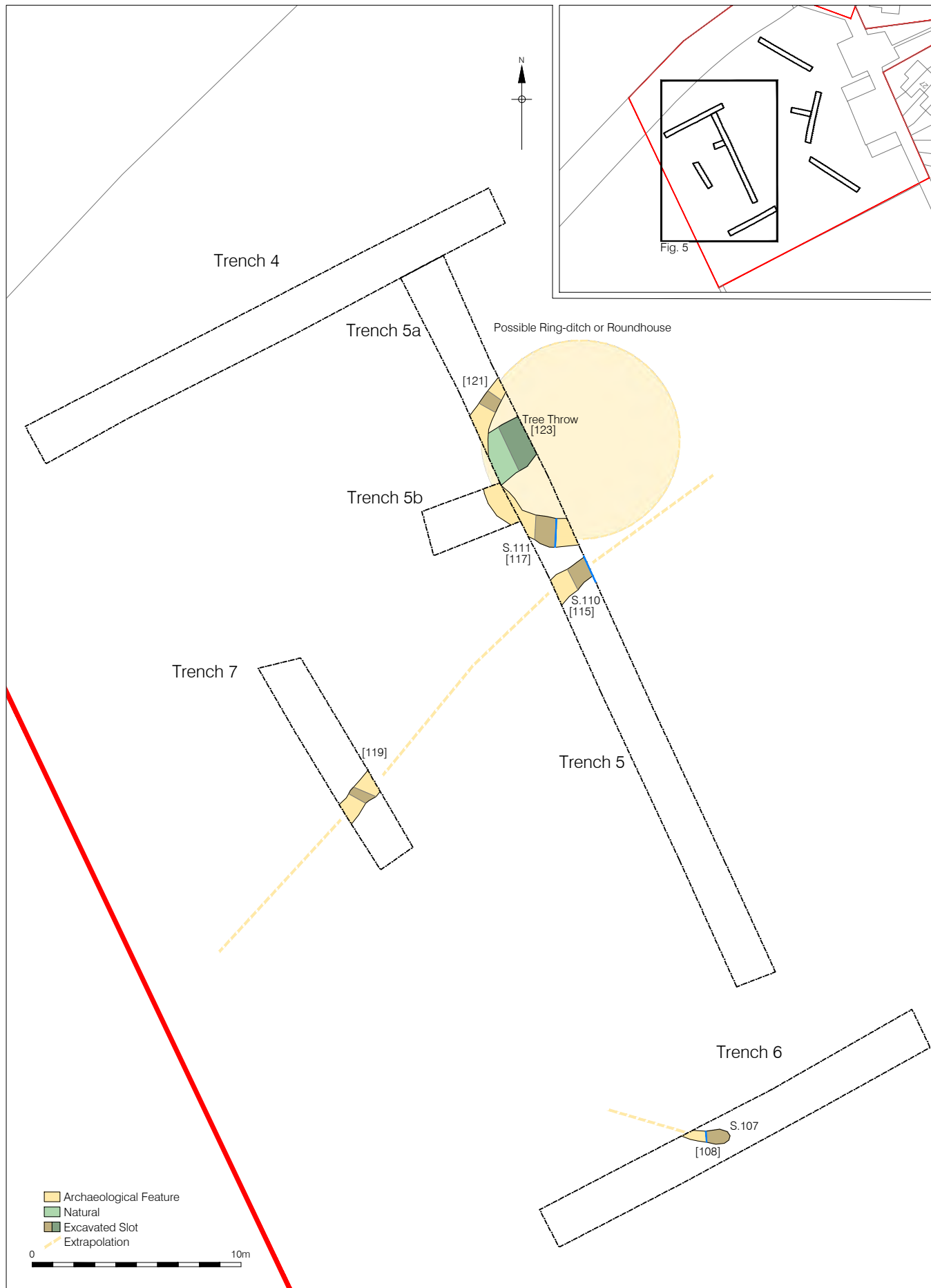
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2018
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 05/12/18 RS

Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:2,000,000, 1:25,000 & 1:20,000 at A4









12 APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: Site, view south-west



Plate 2: Trench 1, view north-west



Plate 3: Trench 3, view south-east



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



Plate 5: Trench 5, view south-east



Plate 6: Trench 5b showing ring-ditch, view north-east



Plate 7: Ditch [117], view south-east



Plate 8: Ditch [115], view south-west



Plate 9: Trench 6: view north-east



Plate 10: Ditch [108], view west



Plate 11: Trench 7, view north-west



Plate 12: Ditch [119], view south-west

13 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Cut	Trench	Type	Category
100	100	1-7	Layer	Topsoil
101	101	1-7	Layer	Subsoil
102	102	1-7	Layer	Natural
103	103	1	Cut	Natural
104	103	1	Fill	Natural
105	106	3	Fill	Ditch
106	106	3	Cut	Ditch
107	108	6	Fill	Ditch
108	108	6	Cut	Ditch
109	110	1	Fill	Ditch
110	110	1	Cut	Ditch
111	106	3	Fill	Ditch
112	106	3	Fill	Ditch
113	113	5	Layer	Colluvium
114	115	5	Fill	Ditch
115	115	5	Cut	Ditch
116	117	5	Fill	Ditch
117	117	5	Cut	Ditch
118	119	7	Fill	Ditch
119	119	7	Cut	Ditch
120	121	5	Fill	Ditch
121	121	5	Cut	Ditch
122	123	5	Fill	Natural
123	123	5	Cut	Natural

14 APPENDIX 3: TRENCH TABLES

TRENCH 1	Figures 3 & 4	Plate 2	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 25m	Level of Natural (m OD): 16.6m	
Deposit	Context No.	Maximum Depth (m)	
		NW End	SE End
Topsoil	(100)	0.34m	0.32m
Subsoil	(101)	0.38m	0.31m
Natural	(102)	0.72m+	0.64m+
<p>Summary</p> <p>Trench 1 was located in the south-eastern corner of the site.</p> <p>The trench contained a ditch aligned north-east to south-west and a natural feature.</p>			

TRENCH 2	Figures 3 & 4		
Trench Alignment: NE-SW	Length: 25m	Level of Natural (m OD): 16.5m	
Deposit	Context No.	Maximum Depth (m)	
		NE End	SW End
Topsoil	(100)	0.38m	0.35m
Subsoil	(101)	0.31m	0.38m
Natural	(102)	0.69m+	0.73m+
<p>Summary</p> <p>Trench 2 was located in the eastern part of the site. Following consultation with CCCHET a short extension was added mid-way along the trench to assess the alignments of the ditches identified elsewhere on the site.</p> <p>No archaeologically significant features or deposits were identified in the trench.</p>			

TRENCH 3	Figures 3 & 4	Plate 3	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 25m	Level of Natural (m OD): 16.4m	
Deposit	Context No.	Maximum Depth (m)	
		NW End	SE End
Topsoil	(100)	0.32m	0.33m
Subsoil	(101)	0.42m	0.51m
Natural	(102)	0.74m+	0.83m+
<p>Summary</p>			

Trench 3 was located in the north-eastern part of the site.

The trench contained a single ditch aligned north-east to south-west.

TRENCH 4	Figures 3 & 5			
Trench Alignment: NE-SW	Length: 25m	Level of Natural (m OD): 16.6m		
Deposit	Context No.	Maximum Depth (m)		
		NE End	SW End	
Topsoil	(100)	0.36m	0.3m	
Subsoil	(101)	0.28m	0.34m	
Natural	(102)	0.64m+	0.64m+	
Summary				
Trench 3 was located in the north-western part of the site.				
No archaeologically significant features or deposits were identified in the trench.				

TRENCH 5	Figures 3 & 5		Plates 5 & 6	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 35m	Level of Natural (m OD): 16.8m		
Deposit	Context No.	Maximum Depth (m)		
		NW End	SE End	
Topsoil	(100)	0.32m	0.32m	
Subsoil	(101)	0.1m	0.26m	
Colluvium	(103)	0.2m	0.06m	
Natural	(102)	0.61m+	0.64m+	
Summary				
Trench 5 was located in the western part of the site. Following consultation with CCCHET the trench was extended to meet Trench 4 to the north and a short extension was added mid-way along the trench to assess the nature of a potential ring-ditch.				
Two ditches, one representing a ring-ditch, and a tree throw were identified in the trench.				

TRENCH 6	Figures 3 & 5		Plate 9	
Trench Alignment: NE-SW	Length: 25m	Level of Natural (m OD): 16.8m		

Deposit	Context No.	Maximum Depth (m)	
		NE End	SW End
Topsoil	(100)	0.3m	0.38m
Subsoil	(101)	0.32m	0.3m
Natural	(102)	0.62m+	0.68m+
<p>Summary</p> <p>Trench 6 was located in the south-western part of the site.</p> <p>The trench contained a single ditch aligned north-east to south-west.</p>			

TRENCH 7	Figures 3 & 5	Plate 11	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 10m	Level of Natural (m OD): 16.8m	
Deposit	Context No.	Maximum Depth (m)	
		NW End	SE End
Topsoil	(100)	0.3m	0.3m
Subsoil	(101)	0.31m	0.31m
Natural	(102)	0.6m+	0.61m+
<p>Summary</p> <p>Trench 6 was located in the south-western part of the site.</p> <p>The trench contained a single ditch aligned north-east to south-west.</p>			

15 APPENDIX 4: ENVIRONMENTAL CATALOGUE

Sample No.	1	2
Context No.	107	105
Feature No.	108	106
Volume of bulk (litres)	14	16
Volume of flot (millilitres)	54	50
Method of processing	F	F
Heavy Residue		
Charcoal		
Charcoal >4 mm	1	
Charcoal 2 - 4 mm	1	1
Charcoal <2 mm		
Bone		
Animal bone (undiff.)	1	1
Other Material		
Metal nail	1	
Pottery	1	1
Terrestrial molluscs	Habitat	
Oxyloma sp.	Wetlands	
Trichia spp.	Catholic	1
Broken shell - indeterminate	3	1
Flot Residue		
Charcoal		
Charcoal >4 mm		
Charcoal 2 - 4 mm	1	2
Charcoal <2 mm	4	4
Frag. of ID size	X	X
Seeds (likely intrusive)	Common Name	
Betula sp.	Birch	1
Chenopodium spp.	Goosefoots	1
Fumaria officinalis	Common fumitory	1
Lamium sp.	Dead-nettles	3
Montia sp.	Blinks	2
Rubus spp.	Brambles	1
Sambucus sp.	Elder	1
Silene sp.	Campions	2
Sonchus sp.	Sow-thistles	1
Stellaria spp.	Stitchworts	3

Sample No.		1	2
Context No.		107	105
Feature No.		108	106
Volume of bulk (litres)		14	16
Volume of flot (millilitres)		54	50
Method of processing		F	F
Urtica sp.	Nettles	3	
Broken seeds - indeterminate			2
Seed cases - indeterminate		1	1
Burnt seeds			
Hordeum vulgare	Barley	1	
Triticum sp. (grains)	Undiff. Wheat	1	1
Broken/distorted cereal - indeterminate grains		1	1
Terrestrial molluscs Habitat			
Cecilioides acicula	Open ground	4	4
Cochlicopa lubrica	Catholic		1
Oxychilus spp.	Sheltered places	1	1
Pupilla muscorum	Dry, exposed places	1	3
Trichia spp.	Catholic	2	2
Vallonia spp.	Open ground	2	3
Vertigo pygmaea	Open ground	1	1
Snail eggs		3	3
Broken shell - indeterminate		4	
Juvenile snails - indeterminate		4	3
Modern Plant Material			
Roots and rootlets		3	3
Other Remains			
Insect remains		2	
insect eggs/worm cases			1
Small animal bone		2	1
Slag		1	
Coal			1
Vitreous material		1	3

15 APPENDIX 5: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-336207	
Project details	
Project name	Land at Station Road, Foxton, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation
Short description of the project	This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology at Station Road, Foxton (NGR TL4088 4841) between 15th and 19th November 2018. The work was commissioned by Hill Residential Ltd. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the site prior to its redevelopment. The evaluation identified four ditches, on varying alignments, as well as part of a ring-ditch. The slight variations in ditch alignments suggest the potential for different periods, or at least differing phases, of activity. The general lack of finds evidence recovered suggest that the site is on the away from settlement, not within a settlement 'core', but the presence of a ring-ditch (in Trench 5) may contradict this assertion. A ring-ditch was identified in the western part of the site, it was not associated with rich finds assemblages suggesting the potential for it being a small barrow. However, given its small size, it could be a roundhouse on the peripheries of settlement. The ditches present on the site are all on slightly different alignments which point to the presence of different phases of activity. Some of these ditches are likely related to the ring-ditch, identified in Trench 5, being an associated system of boundaries. Two natural features, likely representing tree throws, were also identified on the site.
Project dates	Start: 15-11-2018 End: 19-11-2018
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ECB 5403 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	ECB 5403 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Monument type	RING-DITCH Uncertain
Significant Finds	POT Roman
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Uncertain
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Rural commercial
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE FOXTON Land at Station Road, Foxton, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation
Postcode	CB22 6SA
Study area	0.5 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 4088 4841 52.115604122746 0.057744194566 52 06 56 N 000 03 27 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	Min: 16.4m Max: 17.4m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	Cambridge HET
Project design originator	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project director/manager	Mark Hinman
Project supervisor	Matthew Jones
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Archive Facility
Physical Archive ID	ECB 5403
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones", "Ceramics", "Environmental"
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Archive Facility
Digital Archive ID	ECB 5403
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Database", "GIS", "Geophysics", "Images raster / digital photography", "Spreadsheets", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Archive Facility
Paper Archive ID	ECB 5403
Paper Contents	"none"

Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Notebook - Excavation", "Research", "General Notes", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey", "Unpublished Text"
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land at Station Road, Foxton, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Jones, M.
Other bibliographic details	R.13501
Date	2018
Issuer or publisher	Pre-Construct Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Pampisford
Description	A-4 bound report with 5 figures, 10 plates and 4 appendices

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