

**MILL ROAD DEPOT PHASE 2,
MILL ROAD, CAMBRIDGE**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

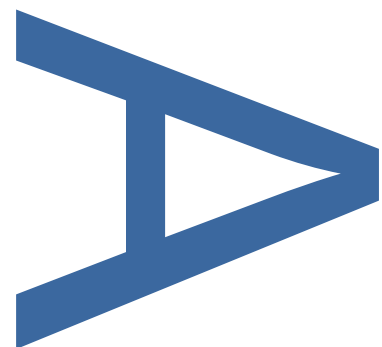
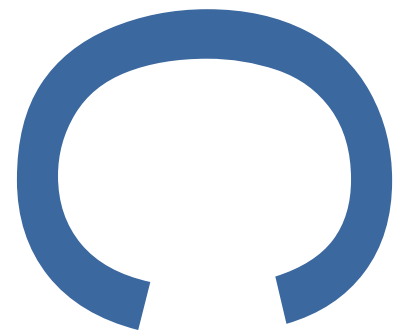
**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:
CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL**

**PLANNING APPLICATION:
19/0175/FUL**

REPORT NO: R13884

SITE CODE: ECB 5951

OCTOBER 2019



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

Land at Mill Road Depot, Phase 2, Mill Road, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation

Local Planning Authority: Cambridge City Council

Planning Reference: 19/0175/FUL

Central National Grid Reference: TL 4641 5794

Site Code: ECB5951

Oasis Reference: preconst1-370298

Report No. R 13884

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October 2019

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ABSTRACT

A programme of archaeological trial trenching was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on Land at Mill Road Depot, Mill Road, Cambridge. The archaeological work was commissioned by Cambridge Investment Partnership in response to an archaeological planning condition attached to the proposed residential development of the site (Planning Reference: 19/0175/FUL).

One L-shaped trial trench measuring a total of 29m in length and 2m in width was excavated between 5th and 6th of September 2019. The trench revealed a series of late 19th to early 20th century walls, including a coal cellar and possible fire place. Historic mapping confirms that these are parts of the remains of 'The Limes', a villa built in the mid- 19th century for the Headly brothers who owned The Eagle Iron Foundry and coprolite mill in the northern part of the site. The villa was demolished in the early 1960s.

The evaluation also revealed extensive truncation to the immediate area. The foundations for 'The Limes' villa truncated a near sterile layer of made ground up to 1.4m thick. It is possible that the area was quarried and levelled prior to and for the construction of the railway, removing any potential earlier archaeological remains.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology (PCA) was commissioned by Cambridge Investment Partnership to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation at the proposed development of the former Mill Road Depot, Mill Road, Cambridge (Figure 1).
- 1.2 Mill Road Depot lies on the northern side of Mill Road adjacent to the railway line at grid reference TL 4641 5794. It lately functioned as a depot for Cambridge City Council City Council with offices, motor repair/servicing, waste separation and storage, a car wash facility and workshops, parking and storage facilities. The northern part of Mill Road Depot was evaluated in 2018 (Phase 1). The Phase 2 development site is c. 0.3ha in extent and is currently a car park at the southern end of the former Mill Road Depot by Mill Road Bridge.
- 1.3 The proposed development (planning application ref 19/0175/FUL) is for the erection of an apartment building including 45 affordable dwellings and a mixed-use building with four affordable dwellings above with a community centre, office and meeting rooms. Change of use of Gate House to mixed use including commercial ground floor and one dwelling on first floor. Associated external works including provision of open space including play area, cycle parking, landscaping and demolition of 'link building' attached to the Old Library (Grade II Listed).
- 1.4 In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework 2019 a condition requiring archaeological work was placed on the planning consent due to the high archaeological potential of the proposed development site. An archaeological brief was issued by the Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CHET) (Thomas 2019) and the work was carried out according to a Written Statement of Investigation (WSI), prepared by PCA (Hobbs 2019) and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
- 1.5 One trench, measuring 29m x 2m was excavated and recorded on 5-6 September 2019 (Figure 2). This report describes the results of the evaluation.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Geology

2.2 The underlying bedrock is comprised of West Melbury Chalk Formation Chalk. This is a Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 94 to 101 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period, in a local environment dominated by warm chalk seas.

2.3 The superficial geological deposits are comprised of River Terrace 3 Sand and Gravel deposits, formed in the Quaternary period up to 3 million years ago in riverine environments (BGS 2018).

2.4 Topography

2.5 Topographically, the proposed development site lies on level ground at c. 17m above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1 This information was drawn from the Phase 1 WSI (Meckseper 2018), Heritage Statement (Carroll 2017), Archaeological Brief (Thomas 2019) and accompanying Historic Environment Record (HER) information.

General

- 3.1.2 Few archaeological investigations have been undertaken in the immediate vicinity of the site. The most significant findings so far were during investigations at the former Cattle Market at Hills Road c.850m to the south which revealed Roman earthworks of a possible Roman 'camp' or habitation site and pottery (ECB159, HER 04814, HER 05145). Hills Road follows the line of a former Roman road.

Prehistoric

- 3.1.3 Very little evidence of prehistoric activity is recorded within the vicinity of the site. One findspot consisting of a Ptolemy soter, dating to 323-285BC was recovered from a gravel pit c.400m to the west of the site (CHER04577).
- 3.1.4 PCA undertook an evaluation (Meckseper 2018) immediately to the North of the same site. A paleochannel with a single sherd of bronze age pottery was found and an undated posthole.

Roman

- 3.1.5 Roman evidence largely consists of isolated findspots. For instance, Roman coins were found in Coldham's Lane (HER 04626), a Roman cup on Coldhams Common (HER 05054), a Roman fibula brooch in Thoday Street (HER 04702), two Bronze figurines of Mercury and Hercules (CHER03420) were recovered from a gravel pit c.400m to the west of the site and Roman pottery in an allotment in Coleridge Road (HER 04868). These are isolated find spots but are part of the general activity and movement of people in the Roman hinterland of Cambridge.
- 3.1.6 Roman to medieval gravel extraction was recorded prior to construction of the CB1 development at Hills Road.
- 3.1.7 However, further Roman evidence has been identified c.500m to the south-west

of the site where an evaluation identified two north-south aligned boundary ditches, with a single sherd of Roman pottery recovered. However, it is plausible that these ditches post-date the Roman period. A Roman cemetery has been recorded c.400m west of the site consisting of two Roman glass vessels, one an elaborate cut white glass goblet (CHER02303).

Saxon

- 3.1.8 The main Saxon evidence consists of two Saxon burials were found in Mill Road Cemetery in 1847, together with a fragment of a shield boss and a spearhead (HER04622). Further Saxon findspots have been identified including scattered Saxon finds at Barnwell c.400m west of the site (CHER 05339).

Medieval

- 3.1.9 It is likely that in the medieval period the land around Mill Road comprised agricultural fields. Only a small number of medieval findspots have been identified in the vicinity of the site including an impression of a brass secretum or private seal depicting St. John the Baptist on a charger (CHER 04644) in a coprolite pit.

Post-medieval

- 3.1.10 Mill Road cemetery (CB15751) a Grade II registered cemetery, measuring 3.5ha, was established in 1848. It consists of a cemetery enclosed by a low brick wall with internal features such as a knapped flint and stone lodge and several listed monuments surrounded by a serpentine perimeter path. The cemetery is located 300m to the north-west of the current site.
- 3.1.11 The former Eagle Iron Foundry, with associated coprolite mill and timber yard, was present within the boundary of the current site (MCB20620). This has, however, been completely demolished. Former gravel extraction pits have also been recorded in the area (MCB20568).
- 3.1.12 A number of post-medieval buildings and terraces have been identified in the vicinity of the site including South Street (MCB18567), the former Union Workhouse (MCB20132), 56& 56a Mill Road (MCB20919), the Church of St. Barnabas (CB14820). Further post-medieval features have also been identified

including a pump well at 75 Norfolk Street (CB15506).

Cartographic Evidence

- 3.1.13 Cartographic evidence shows that the western part of Mill Road had been constructed by 1830 but the area was still very much in agricultural use until the construction of the railway in 1845 (Beacon 2017). This led to the rapid construction of houses along Mill Road and the development of its perpendicular side streets, lined with terraced housing.
- 3.1.14 The Mill Road Depot site itself was first occupied after 1846 when the Hadley brothers established the Eagle Iron Foundry. In 1888 cartographic evidence shows that the depot site was occupied by the buildings of the Eagle Foundry, a railway sidings and a coprolite mill, all adjacent to the railway line (Carroll 2017).
- 3.1.15 By 1927 the site had been re-developed with new buildings and was used as a 'Corporation Depot' and coal depot, again with a siding connecting the site with the main railway line. The siding is still on maps of the mid- 20th century, together with offices and warehouses around it, the majority of which are still on the site today.

Phase 1 Evaluation

- 3.1.16 An evaluation of the northern part of Mill Road Depot in 2018 had revealed no significant archaeological remains. Three trenches were excavated which contained a prehistoric paleochannel on a WNW-ESE alignment in Trench 2 and a single isolated posthole in Trench 3. A total of three pottery fragments were retrieved from the features. The pottery was mid Bronze Age to late Bronze Age/early Iron Age in date (Meckseper 2018).

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 General

- 4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation comprised one 29m x 2m trial trench. This was in an L-shaped form and located towards the southern end of the development area (Figure 2, Plate 1).

4.2 Excavation methodology

- 4.2.1 Ground reduction during the evaluation was carried out using a 8 ton 360° rubber tracked mechanical excavator. Modern made ground and other overburden of low archaeological value was removed in spits down to the level of the walls or undisturbed natural geological deposits (whichever came first) where archaeological features could be observed and recorded.
- 4.2.2 Exposed surfaces and walls 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 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 are listed in Appendix 1.

4.3.3 High-resolution digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits and were used to keep a record of the excavation process. In addition, monochrome photographs were taken of significant features.

4.4 Environmental Sampling and Artefact Retrieval

4.4.1 No environmental samples were taken during this phase.

4.4.2 Brick fragments, fragments of structural stone dressings, crushed metal, lead pipe and a 20th century industrial lamp shade were retrieved, predominantly from demolition layer (106) (Plate 6). These were not retained.

5 QUANTIFICATION OF ARCHIVE

5.1 Paper Archive

Context register sheets	0
Context sheets	15
Plan registers	1
Plans at 1:50	1
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 & 1:50	2
Trench record sheets	1
Photo register sheets	1
Small finds register sheets	0
Environmental register sheets	0

5.2 Digital Archive

Digital photos	48
GPS survey files	1
Digital plans	1
GIS project	
Access database	1

5.3 Physical Archive

Struck flint	0
Burnt flint	0
Pottery	0
Ceramic building material (CBM)	0
Glass	0
Briquetage	0
Small Finds	0
Slag	0
Animal bone	0
Shell	0
Environmental bulk samples	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

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The principal result of the fieldwork was that the foundations of a late 19th/ early 20th century building were found. No earlier archaeological features or layers were revealed during this evaluation.

6.2 Overburden and natural geological deposits

- 6.2.1 During the archaeological excavation of the trench modern made ground layers were removed by machine. These comprised the modern car park surface of a 0.20m thick concrete slab (100) above two thin make-up layers of tarmac (101) and crushed hardcore (102). In the northern part of the trench these make-up layers were directly above a demolition layer of dark brownish yellow brick rubble (106) and a series of demolished walls (described below) and (Section 1 Figure 3).
- 6.2.2 In the southern part of the trench the make-up layers were above a blackish clayey silt levelling layer (103) with rare fragments of brick and stone, which was 0.3m thick. Below the levelling layer was an up to 1.4m thick deposit (104) of a near sterile soil comprising a dark brown sandy silt with occasional brick fragments and charcoal flecks (Section 2 Figure 3, Plate 2).
- 6.2.3 Natural geological deposits comprised brownish orange sand and gravel and white chalk at a depth of c.1.9m below ground level.

6.3 Trench 1

- 6.3.1 Trench 1 contained the remains of a late 19th/early 20th century building (Figure 3, Plate 2, Plate 5). A series of eight brick walls (107) (108) (109) (110) (111) (112) (113) (114) were recorded from the middle to the northern end of the trench. The walls were made of machine-made, yellow gault clay 'Cambridge white' bricks of standard brick dimensions of 22cm x 11cm x 6cm. The walls truncated made-ground layer (104).
- 6.3.2 Wall (107) was an external entrance wall to the structure (109) that is being interpreted as a coal store. This wall was on an E-W alignment and had dimensions of 1.15m+ in length and 0.32m in width. The wall was made up of

Cambridge white bricks with a sandy mortar.. The entrance had been bricked over with (108).

- 6.3.3 Wall (108) was the bricked over entranceway to the coal store, this was a crude finish of brickwork and had dimensions of 0.75m+ in length and 0.25m in width with a coarse sandy mortar.
- 6.3.4 Wall (109) was a rectangular brick structure with black sooting on the inside, this is being interpreted as a coal store. It was 2.2m long and 1.75m wide with a coarse sandy mortar. The structure was on an E-W alignment.
- 6.3.5 Wall (110) was on an E-W alignment with dimensions of 2m+ in length and 0.32m in width, it was bonded together with a sandy mortar and was made up of a factory made brick. This wall was an internal entrance to the coal store.
- 6.3.6 Wall (111) was a potential fireplace, on an N-S alignment this wall had a slightly blackened layer of soot and ash covering the brickwork. It was 3m long and 0.22m wide and made up of Cambridge white bricks, they were bonded together with a coarse sandy mortar. This was abutting (110).
- 6.3.7 Wall (112) was an L shaped supporting wall abutting (110) and (111), it was on an E-W alignment and was of 1.25m in length and 0.30m in width. It was made up on factory made bricks and was bonded together with a sandy mortar.
- 6.3.8 Wall (113) was a long internal diving wall. It was over 5m in length and was 0.3m wide. The wall was made up of Cambridge white and factory made bricks and bonded together with a sandy mortar. It was on an E-W alignment.
- 6.3.9 Wall (114) could have been either a supporting wall or the base of a step. This was 1.5m in length and 0.5m wide and was bonded together with a sandy mortar. The wall was abutting (113).

7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The archaeological evaluation at Mill Road Depot, Mill Road, Cambridgeshire revealed evidence for a 19th century building but no earlier archaeological remains.
- 7.2 The evaluation revealed parts of the brick foundations of a substantial 19th century building. The historical development of the Mill Road Depot site is described in detail in the Heritage Statement (Carroll 20117). This shows the site to be occupied from the mid-18th century by the Headly brothers who took advantage of the proximity of the land to the newly built railway line and its supply lines to establish The Eagle Iron Foundry and a coprolite mill.
- 7.3 The 1886 and 1888 Ordnance Survey (OS) maps of the site show the Eagle Iron Foundry and corprolite mill buildings adjacent to the railway (Figures 5 and 6). The southern part of the site is occupied by a separate building surrounded by trees, which is marked as 'The Limes', and is identified in the 1851 census data as the home of the Headly brothers (ibid). The Royal Commission of Historical Monuments (RCHM) described 'The Limes' in 1959 as an early example of 'the lofty, irregular-planned house of indeterminate Gothic inspiration'. It was of two storeys with walls of gault brick with stone dressings and slate covered roofs with an 1846 marked stone panel on the southern gable end.
- 7.4 Matching the location of the evaluation trench with historic maps (Figures 4 and 5) confirms that the gault brick foundations found within the trench were indeed the remains of 'The Limes' villa. Fragments of stone lintels or dressings were found within the demolition backfill above the walls, further confirming the building materials described by the RCHM. Identifiable structures within the trench were a possible coal store (Plate 3), which must have been located near the front of the house, most likely in order to be filled by deliveries coming up the drive from Mill Road. There were also internal dividing walls and a possible fireplace (Plate 4). The exact location of the fireplace within the house is difficult to reconstruct.

- 7.5 Historic maps show that 'The Limes' underwent several alterations throughout the early 20th century and was demolished in the early 1960s, as it was described by the RCHM in 1959 and is not shown on the OS map of 1965. A metal lamp fitting retrieved from the demolition backfill had a distinctive industrial style (Plate 6) and suggests that the building was used as offices or commercial premises before its demolition.
- 7.6 The foundations of the building truncated a 1.4m deep brown soil with 19th century inclusions, which was removed to reveal the sand, gravel and chalk natural ground. The total depth of all layers put the natural ground depth at 1.9m below present ground level, this would suggest that gravel and sand extraction for the laying of the railway had truncated this area of the site and this may have removed the possibility of finding any potential earlier archaeological deposits.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Hill Holdings Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. PCA are grateful to Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team for monitoring the work on behalf of the Local Planning Authority. The project was managed by Christiane Meckseper and was supervised by Tom Learmonth, assisted by David Curry. Figures accompanying this report were prepared by Rosie Scales of PCA's CAD Department.

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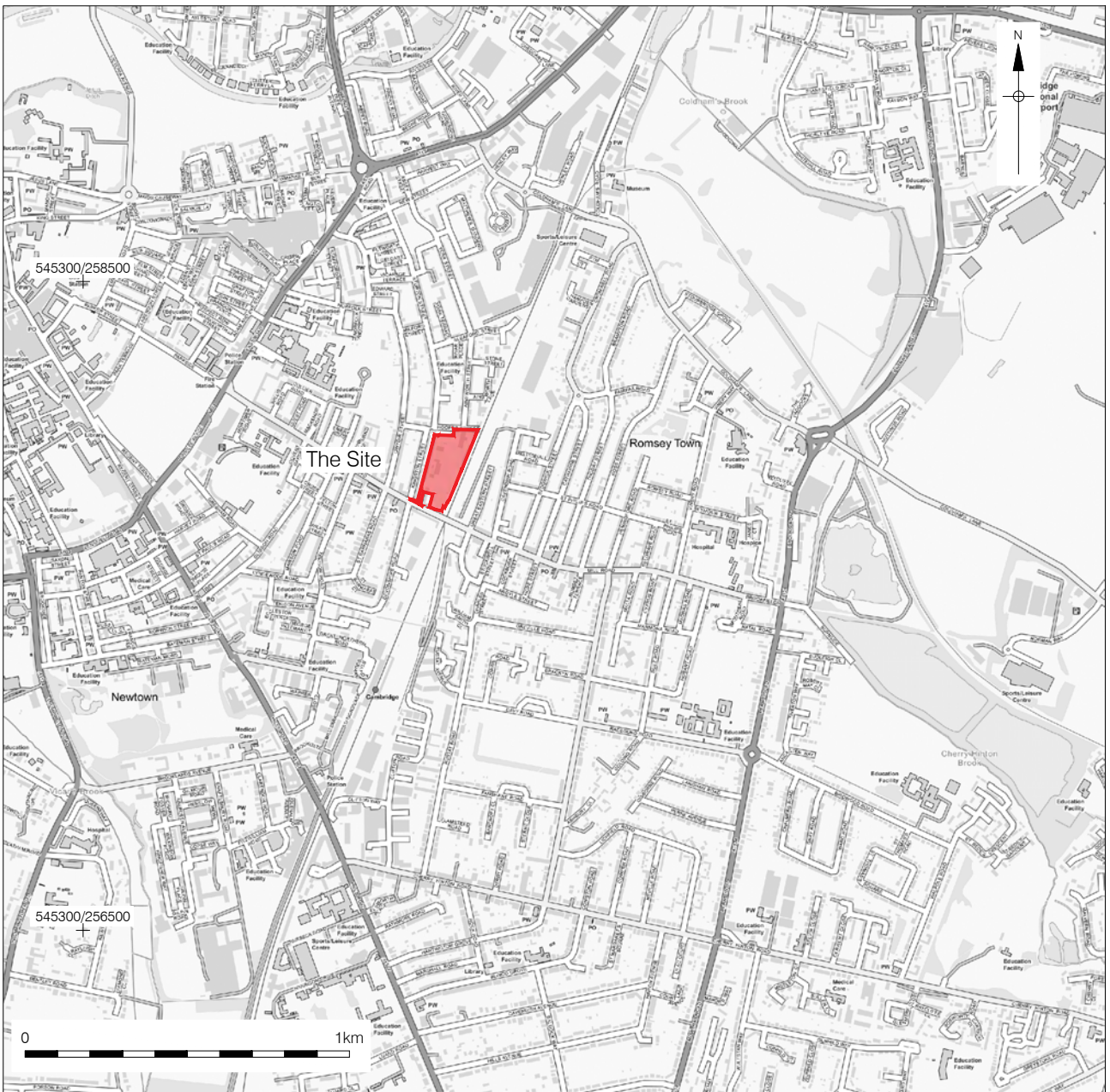
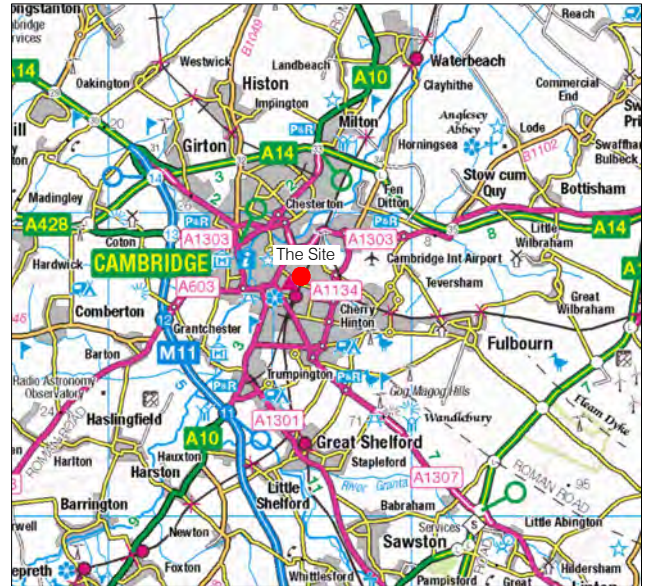
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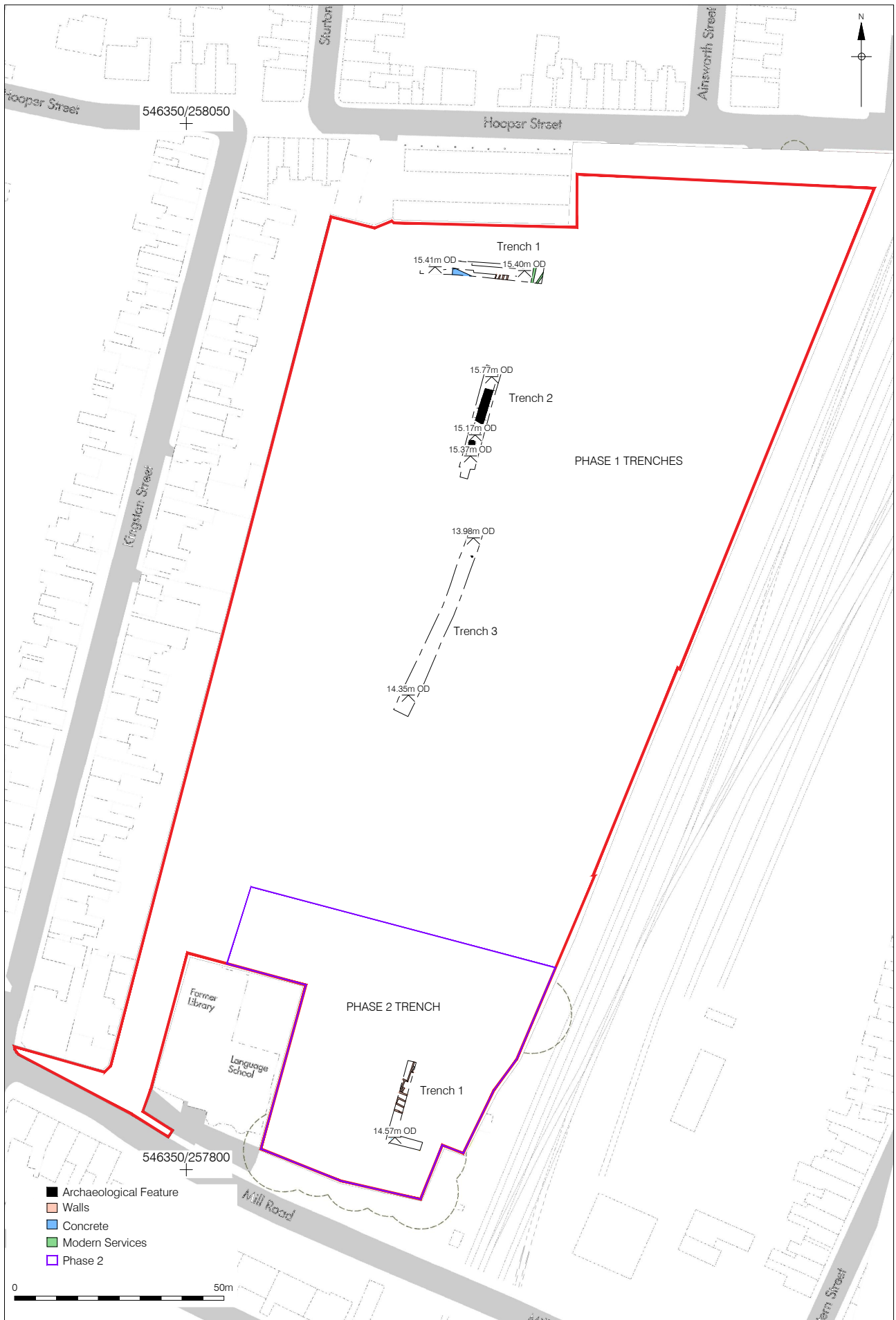
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10 FIGURES





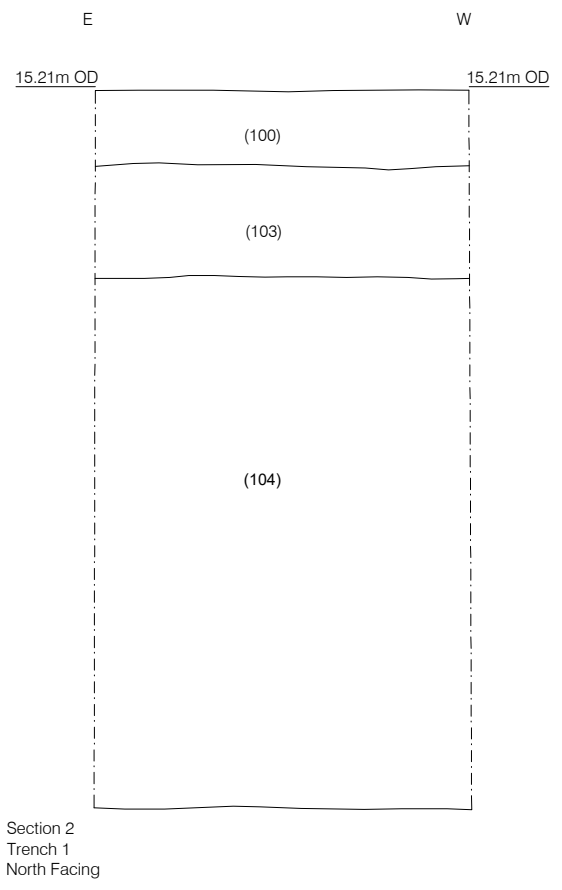
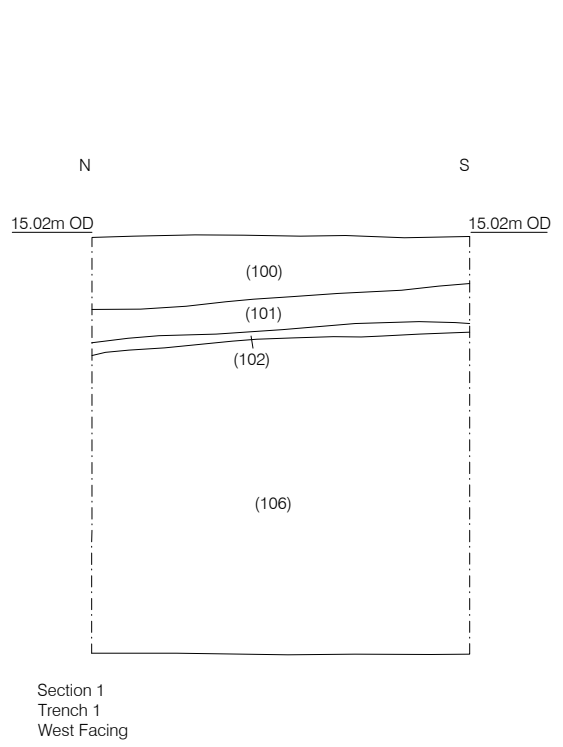
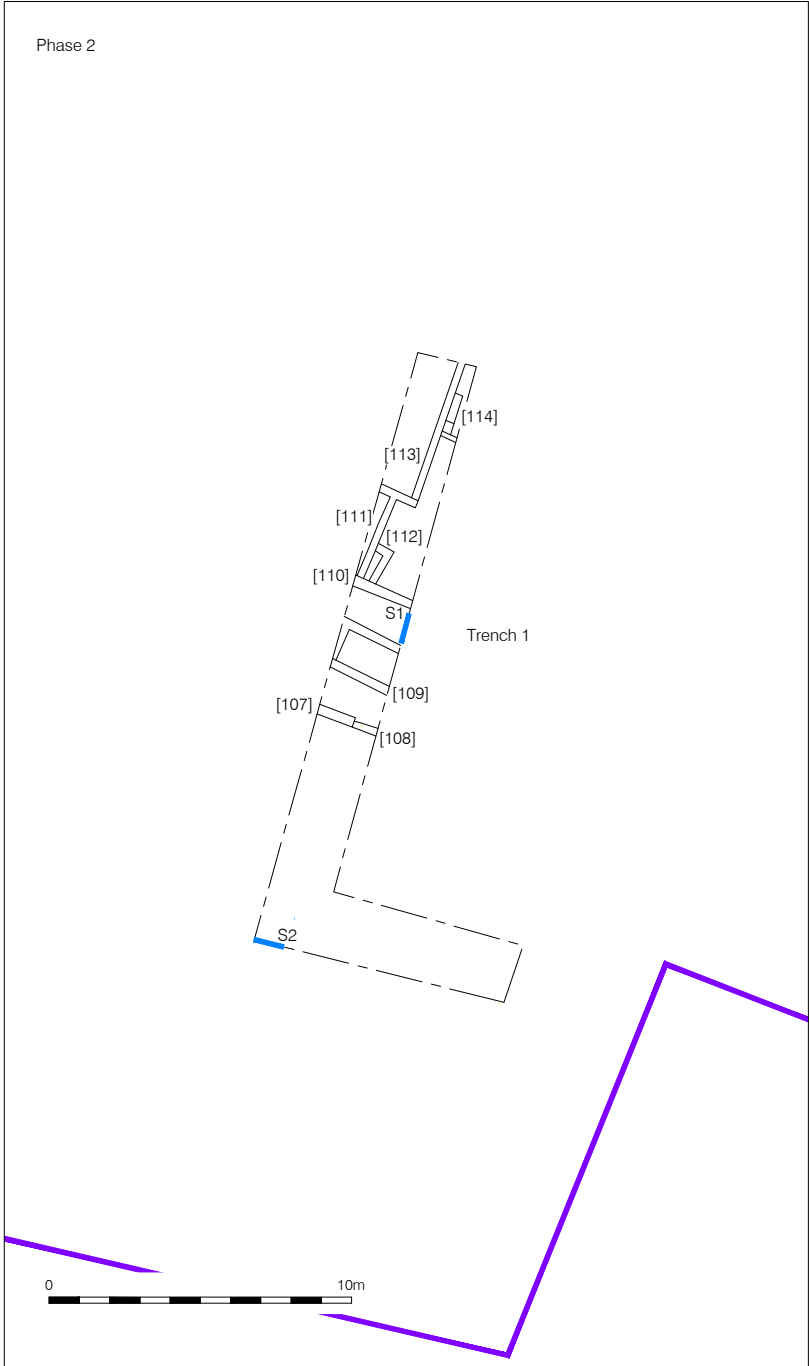


Figure 3
Trench 1 Plan and Sections
Plan 1:250; Section 1:20 at A4



Figure 4
Trench 1 Overlaid with 1889 OS Map
1:800 at A4

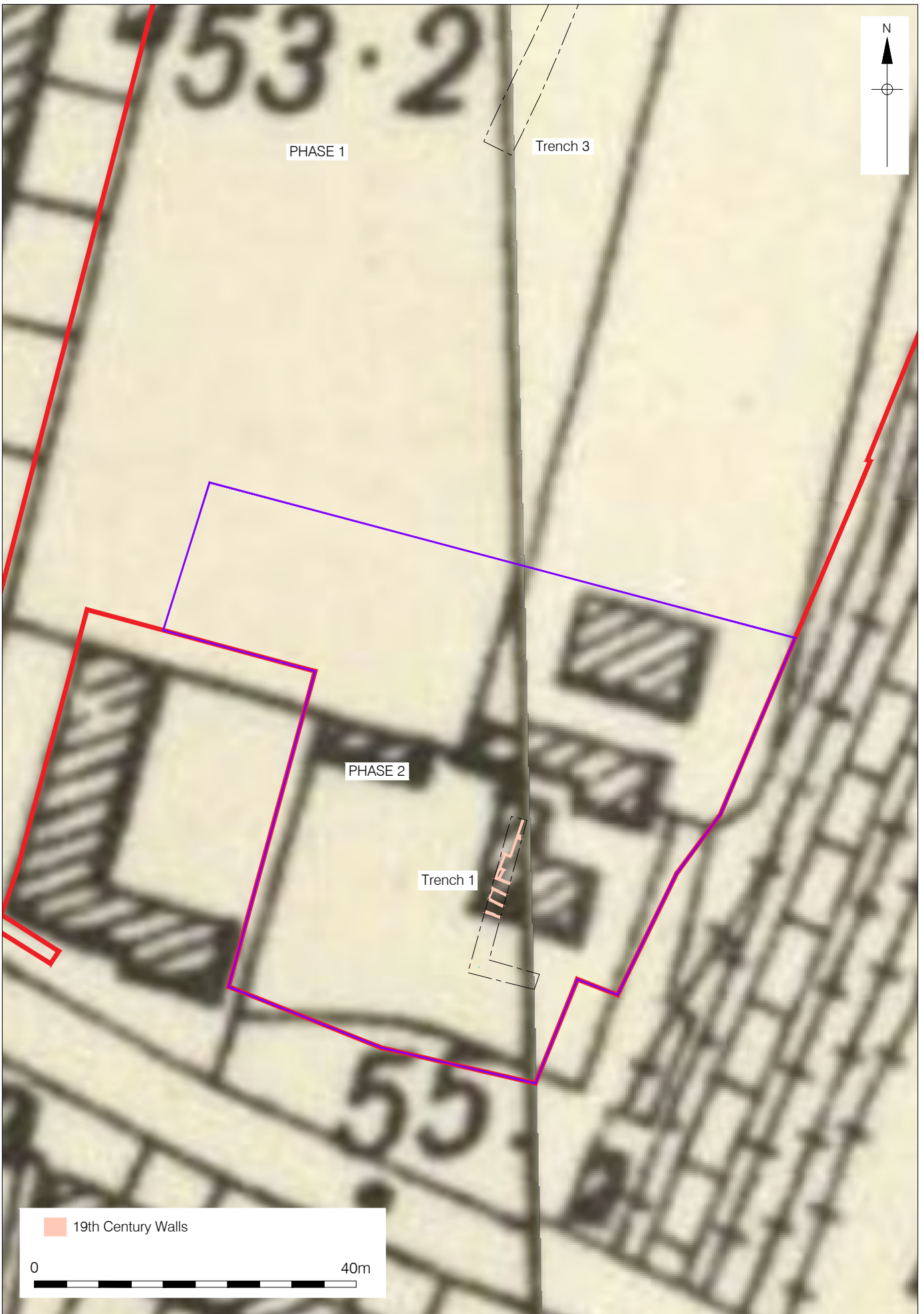


Figure 5
Trench 1 Overlaid with 1904 OS Map
1:800 at A4

11 APPENDIX 1: PLATES

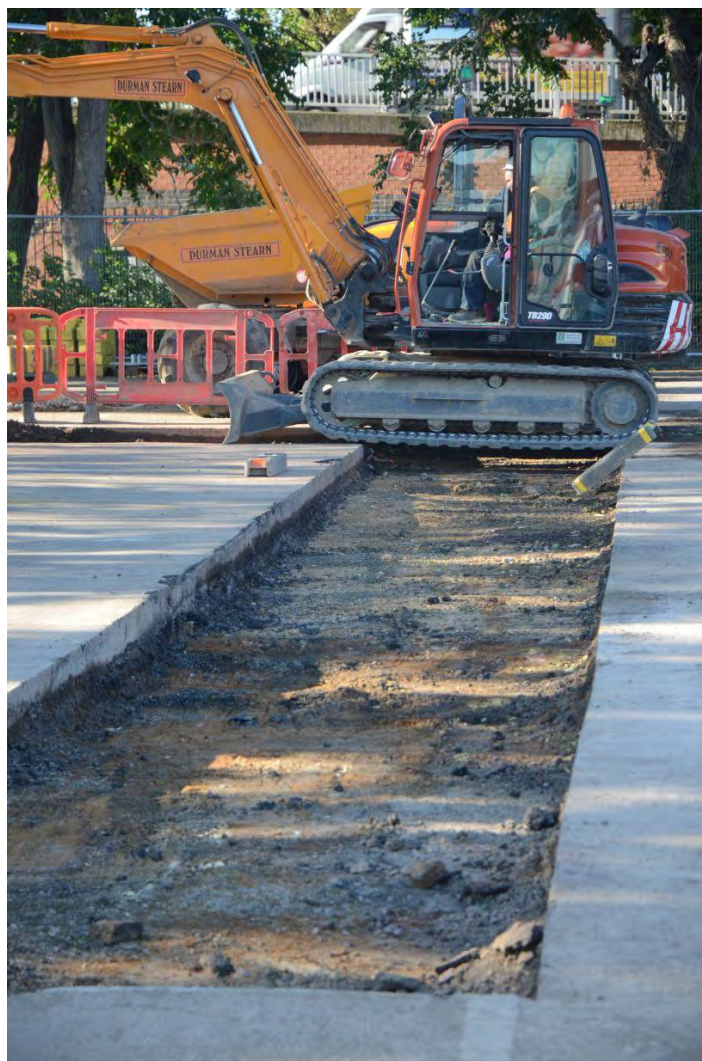


Plate 1: Trench location, looking south towards Mill Road bridge



Plate 2: Southern end of trench, looking west



Plate 3: Northern end of trench, looking north. All 19th century structural remains.



Plate 4: Possible fire place, looking west



Plate 5: Northern end of trench, looking south



Plate 6: Finds assemblage (not kept)

12 APPENDIX 2: TRENCH DETAILS AND CONTENTS INDEX

12.1 Trench 1: L-shaped alignment, length: 25m long, width: 2m, max depth 1.9m.

Context No	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
100	Layer	Made Ground	0	0	0.2	Concreted Tarmac car park surface
101	Layer	Made Ground	0	0	0.1	Levelling made ground layer for carpark surface
102	Layer	Made Ground	0	0	0.05	Leveling layer
103	Layer	Made Ground	0	0	0.3	Levelling layer
104	Layer	Made Ground	0	0	1.4	Layer of 19th century brown loose sandy silt.
105	Layer	Natural	0	0	1.9	Mid Brownish Orange sandy gravel with chalk inclusions.
106	Fill	Backfill	0	0	0.85	Dark brownish yellow rubble backfill. Demolition material from building.
107	Masonry	Wall	2	0.32	0	External wall, entrance to coalstore.
108	Masonry	Wall	0.8	0.3	0	Bricked up entranceway to coalstore
109	Masonry	Wall	2.2	2.2	0	Rectangular brick coalstore
110	Masonry	Wall	2	0.32	0	Internal wall of coalstore
111	Masonry	Wall	3	0.22	0	Possible Fireplace
112	Masonry	Wall	1.25	0.3	0	Supporting wall, may be for Fireplace
113	Masonry	Wall	5	0	0	Internal dividing wall
114	Masonry	Wall	1.5	0.5	0	Supporting wall

13 APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-370298

Project details

Project name Mill Road Depot Phase 2

Short description of the project A programme of archaeological trial trenching was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on Land at Mill Road Depot, Mill Road, Cambridge. The archaeological work was commissioned by Cambridge Investment Partnership in response to an archaeological planning condition attached to the proposed residential development of the site (Planning Reference: 19/0175/FUL). One L-shaped trial trench measuring a total of 29m in length and 2m in width was excavated between 5th and 6th of September 2019. The trench revealed a series of late 19th to early 20th century walls, including a coal cellar and possible fire place. Historic mapping confirms that these are parts of the remains of 'The Limes', a villa built in the mid-19th century for the Headly brothers who owned The Eagle Foundry in the northern part of the site. The villa was demolished in the early 1960s. The evaluation also revealed extensive truncation to the immediate area. The foundations for 'The Limes' villa truncated a sterile layer of made ground up to 1.4m thick. It is possible that the area was quarried and levelled prior to and for the construction of the railway, removing any potential earlier archaeological remains.

Project dates Start: 05-09-2019 End: 06-09-2019

Previous/future work Yes / No

Any associated project reference codes ECB5951 - HER event no.

Any associated project reference codes ECB5951 - Museum accession ID

Type of project Field evaluation

Monument type BUILDING Post Medieval

Project location

Country England
Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE CAMBRIDGE CAMBRIDGE Mill Road Depot,
Phase 2, Cambridge
Study area 0.3 Hectares
Site coordinates TL 4641 5794 52.199792696994 0.142566984814 52 11 59 N 000 08
33 E Point

Project creators

Name of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Organisation

Project brief Cambridge HET
originator

Project design Pre-Construct Archaeology
originator

Project Christiane Meckseper
director/manager

Project supervisor Thomas Learmonth

Type of Developer
sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Physical Archive No
Exists?

Digital Archive CCC County Archaeology Store
recipient

Digital Contents "other"

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

Paper Archive CCC County Archaeology Store
recipient

Paper Contents "other"

Paper Media "Context sheet","Section","Unpublished Text"
available

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