

**LAND WEST OF THE OLD
RECTORY, MARCH,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE:**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

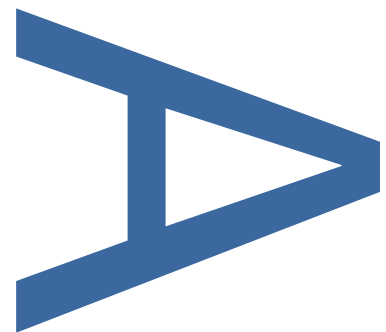
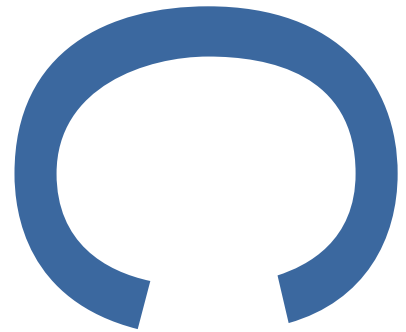
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PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

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CAMBRIDGESHIRE:

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION

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Land West of The Old Rectory, March, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation

Local Planning Authority: Fenland District Council

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ABSTRACT

This report details the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation undertaken in advance of residential development on land west of the Old Rectory, March, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 4179 9644). The archaeological fieldwork was carried out between 12th and 14th November 2019.

The three trial trenches were within the former grounds of the Old Rectory and contained evidence for activity relating to the construction of the Old Rectory and the associated detached coach house in the 1880s. Finds of clay tobacco pipe in a pit and a treethrow in Trench 3, as well as residual in one of the ditches in Trench 1, suggest a low level of activity on the site during the late 17th/ early 18th centuries. Two perpendicular ditches in the middle of the site (Trench 1) may be field/ plot boundaries from the period before the built-up part of the town expanded eastwards from the High Street in the later 19th century. Other features and deposits, including a brick soakaway in Trench 2 and two quarry pits in Trench 1, were associated with the construction of the Old Rectory and coach house. A single residual late medieval (AD 1300–1450) potsherd was found in one of the ditches in Trench 1.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. (PCA) on land west of the Old Rectory, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 9BZ (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 4179 9644) between the 12th and 14th November 2019 (Figure 1; Plate 1).
- 1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by Kingston (March) Limited in response to an archaeological planning condition attached to the construction of 2 x 2-storey 3-bedroom dwellings and conversion of the existing coach house to a 2-storey 3-bedroom dwelling (Fenland District Council Planning Reference: F/YR16/0637/F). Due to the high archaeological potential of the site and surrounding area, Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CHET) has recommended that a condition be placed on F/YR16/0637/F and any subsequent planning consent for an additional dwelling, requiring a scheme of archaeological investigation to be undertaken at the site. The first phase of this work was an archaeological evaluation to assess the nature and potential of the site.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Tom Woolhouse of PCA (Woolhouse 2019) in response to a Brief for archaeological evaluation issued by Gemma Stewart (Stewart 2019) of CHET.
- 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 evaluation trenches, totalling 43m, 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. Following Transfer of Title, the site archive will be deposited at the Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

2.1.1 March is a market town in the middle of the north Cambridgeshire Fenland, located 20km north-west of Ely, 24km east of Peterborough and 32km southwest of King's Lynn in west Norfolk. The site is in the centre of the town, 100m east of the High Street and 200m south of the old (pre-diversion) course of the river Nene. It is currently vacant land measuring approximately 0.25ha, occupied by trees and the former coach house of the Old Rectory, a large residential property to the east of the site. It is bordered by the garden of the Old Rectory to the east, St Peter's Church to the west, Elwyn Court to the north and residential and commercial premises to the south. The site is accessed from The Walnuts, at the south end of Elwyn Court, to the east.

2.2 Geology

2.2.1 The site is located on Ampthill Clay, overlain by March Gravels (British Geological Survey 2019).

2.3 Topography

2.3.1 The site is flat and is at an elevation of approximately 4m above Ordnance Datum (OD). The landscape slopes down slightly to the north towards the river Nene. This is an artificial cut, probably created in the late Saxon period; during prehistory and the Romano-British period, the river had followed a course to the west and north of March (Hall 1987). The High Street crosses the river 250m north-west of the site. Prior to large-scale drainage of the Fens from the early 17th century onwards, March was one of several 'islands' of relatively high, dry ground surrounded by marsh. The highest point of March island, rising to 6m OD, is 1.2km south of the site, at Town End. Some of the land in the former fen surrounding March lies up to several metres below sea level.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site is situated just east of March High Street, adjacent to the 19th-century Old Rectory (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) reference MCB23710) and 50m east of Saint Peter's Church (CHER CB14867), which was built in 1880. Archaeological investigations at Wherry Close, to the north-east of the site, found medieval or post-medieval ditches and a possible Iron Age pit (CHER CB15694; ECB285). Investigations at several sites along the High Street, just a short distance west of the present site, have also found medieval and post-medieval remains. These include, for example, a late-17th- to 18th-century pit containing a cow skeleton, as well as a 16th- to mid-17th-century ditch and evidence of plough-scarring, all recorded at 36 High Street (CHER MCB19684; ECB3826). Evaluation at 38–40 High Street recorded a medieval ditch containing 15th- to 16th-century pottery alongside residual earlier medieval sherds, in addition to a medieval pit (CHER 20266; ECB4275). Evaluation at Old Court Place, High Street, found a 19th-century property boundary ditch and a probably contemporary gravel pit (CHER MCB18522; ECB2901).
- 3.2 Further to the west, investigations on Gaul Road have demonstrated the presence of prehistoric river channels and marsh-filled embayments, later infilled with flood silts and peat, the courses of which can be projected to form a relationship with a bend in the medieval course of the river Nene, near the Market Place. Similar evidence for relict stream and river courses has been found around 800m north-east of the site, at Cedar Close. Here, evaluation and excavation found pits, ditches, postholes, ovens and layers of ash and briquetage, indicating a Roman salt-production site associated with an extinct palaeo-channel (CHER CB15717; ECB1394 and 2605).
- 3.3 The prehistoric fen edge and river channels are known to have been focal points for Mesolithic, Neolithic and Early Bronze Age occupation (for example, CHER nos. 05904, MCB6333–4, 12823–4, 19554, 18589 and 20195). Evaluation at Gaul Road, on the west side of March town centre, found pits and linear features associated with Early Neolithic Mildenhall Ware pottery (CHER

MCB19567; ECB3641). A Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age pit has been recorded during evaluation work near Dartford Road, 900m north-west of the present site (CHER MCB17893; ECB2511). On the higher, drier ground of March 'island', just above the contemporary seasonal flood limits, Iron Age and Roman occupation evidence is known (CHER MCB7203, west of High Street, and CHER 15694 at Wherry Close).

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 General

4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation comprised three trial trenches (Figure 2):

Trench 1: 19m x 1.8m

Trench 2: 13m x 2m

Trench 3: 11m x 2m

4.1.2 The trenches totalled 43m in overall length and provided a 5.7% sample (82.2m²) of the available 1430m² area of the 0.25ha site (excluding 1070m² occupied by root protection areas for retained trees). The trenches were targeted on the footprints of the four proposed new dwellings. Trench 2 was extended to expose a feature that was partially visible at the edge of excavation, which turned out upon full exposure to be a 19th-century brick soakaway.

4.2 Excavation Methodology

4.2.1 Ground reduction during the evaluation was carried out using a 3-ton 360° tracked mechanical excavator, used to strip the trenches (Plate 2). Topsoil and other overburden of low archaeological value were removed in spits down to the level of the first significant archaeological horizon or the undisturbed natural geological deposits, whichever was encountered first.

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 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 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. In addition, monochrome photographs were taken of significant features.

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 large or significant finds assemblages were present, features were subsequently 100% excavated for finds recovery.
- 4.4.2 Linear features were investigated by means of regularly spaced slots amounting to 25% of their lengths. Where stratigraphic relationships between features could not be clearly discerned in plan, relationship slots were also excavated, and these were recorded as part of the GPS survey and noted on the relevant context sheets.
- 4.4.3 Bucket sampling, whereby 90 litres from each soil horizon was taken and hand-

sorted for finds, was undertaken at each end of each trench. However, due to the character of the soil deposits at this site, i.e. garden soil of recent date, and disturbed during construction of the Old Rectory, the bucket sampling did not result in the recovery of any archaeologically significant finds.

5 QUANTIFICATION OF ARCHIVE

5.1 Paper Archive

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Context register sheets | 2 |
| Context sheets | 26 |
| 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 | 10 |
| Trench record sheets | 3 |
| Photo register sheets | 1 |
| Small finds register sheets | 0 |
| Environmental register sheets | 0 |

5.2 Digital Archive

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| Digital photos | 111 |
| GPS survey files | 2 |
| Digital plans | 1 |
| GIS project | 0 |
| Access database | 1 |

5.3 Physical Archive

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Struck flint | 0 |
| Burnt flint | 0 |
| Pottery | 2 (62g) |
| Ceramic building material (CBM) | 5 (4123g) |
| Clay tobacco pipe | 17 |
| Glass | 0 |
| Briquetage | 0 |
| Small Finds | 0 |
| Slag | 0 |
| Animal bone | 0 |
| Shell | 0 |

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

6.1 Overview

- 6.1.1 During the evaluation, a series of post-medieval, modern and natural features were identified and recorded. The three trenches were within the former grounds of the Old Rectory and contained evidence for activity relating to the construction of the Old Rectory and the associated detached coach house. An east–west ditch [119] in the middle of the site (Trench 1) may be a field or plot boundary dating from the period immediately before the built-up area of the town expanded eastwards from the High Street. Finds of clay tobacco pipe in a pit and a treethrow, as well as residual in Ditch [119], suggest low-level activity on the site in the late 17th/ early 18th centuries.

6.2 Undated Natural Features

Treethrow [109] (Trench 2)

- 6.2.1 Possible Treethrow [109] was uncovered in Trench 2, in the south-western corner of the site (Figure 4). Its full extent was not determined as it extended beyond the trench edge, but the exposed part of the feature measured 2.2m long, 0.66m wide and 0.42m deep, with a moderately sloping concave profile and a fill of topsoil-like mid-brown silty sand (108). No finds were present.

6.3 Late 17th to Early 18th Century

Treethrow [123] and Pit [121] (Trench 3)

- 6.3.1 Treethrow [123] was uncovered beneath the subsoil (102) in Trench 3, in the south-eastern part of the site (Figure 5; Plate 3). The feature measured 5.5m+ long, 1.3m wide and 0.12m deep and had a topsoil-like fill of mid-brown sandy silt (122) which contained two fragments of clay tobacco pipe bowl and nine stems. These date to the late 17th or early 18th century (c. AD 1680–1710) (see Jarrett, Section 7.3).
- 6.3.2 Pit [121] was uncovered at the southern end of Trench 3, in the south-eastern corner of the site. It appeared to be square in plan, with a steep-sided but somewhat irregular/ undercutting profile (Figure 5, Section 6; Plate 9). It was 1.56m long, at least 1m wide, and 0.84m deep, with a fill of dark brown sandy

silt (120) very similar to the topsoil. Pit [121] cut the subsoil. The feature extended beyond the trench. Finds from Pit [121] consist of three fragments of clay tobacco pipe stem, the thickness and bore of which are in keeping with a late-17th-century date (see Jarrett, Section 7.3).

6.4 18th/19th Century?

Ditches [114] and [119] (Trench 1)

- 6.4.1 Ditch [114] was uncovered at the northern end of Trench 1, in the central area of the site (Figure 3; Plate 7). The linear feature extended across the trench on a north–south alignment and measured 0.94m in width and 0.28m in depth, with a moderately sloping concave profile and a single fill of mid-brownish-grey silty sand (113). The full length of the ditch was undetermined; it was not observed in any other trench on site. No finds were present in Ditch [114]. Ditch [114] cut the subsoil (102) and was sealed by the topsoil (101) and cut by modern Pit [126].
- 6.4.2 Ditch [119] was uncovered in the middle of Trench 1 (Figure 3; Plate 8). The feature was on an east–west alignment and measured 1.86m in width and 0.68m in depth, with a fairly steep-sided, flat-based profile. The exposed part of the feature measured 3.4m+ long; the full length of the feature is not known. Ditch [119] cut the subsoil (102) and was sealed by the topsoil (101).
- 6.4.3 Ditch [119] yielded a variety of finds from two of its four fills. A piece of iron rod was identified in the uppermost fill (115) of the ditch. Six animal bones, likely from two separate animals, were recovered from fill (116). Two sherds of pottery were also recovered from fill (116). One is from a glazed red earthenware bowl and may be of 17th-century date; the other is a residual sherd of Huntingdon Late Medieval Calcareous Ware (see Jarrett, Section 7.1). Two clay tobacco pipe stem fragments and a clay tobacco pipe bowl were also retrieved from fill (116) and dated to the late 17th or early 18th century (c. AD 1680–1710) (see Jarrett, Section 7.3). One of the lower fills (117) contained fragments of 19th-/ early-20th-century brick (see Hayward, Section 7.2).

6.5 Late 19th Century

Soakaway [107] (Trench 2) and Quarry Pits [128] and [130] (Trench 1)

- 6.5.1 Soakaway [107] was uncovered in Trench 2, in the south-western part of the site (Figure 4; Plates 4–5). The trench was extended to investigate and characterise the feature more fully. The soakaway was circular in plan and consisted of a brick and mortar structure (124) measuring 0.9m in diameter. The depth of the feature was not determined. A brick sample was taken from the uppermost course of Soakaway [107] and was dated to the late 19th/ early 20th century (see Hayward, Section 7.2). The soakaway was cut through the subsoil (102) and the structure was overlain by the topsoil (101) and recent made ground (110).
- 6.5.2 The soakaway was constructed within a wider (1.92m diameter) circular, vertical-sided construction cut [107]. It was backfilled with sand (111) and redeposited topsoil (112) and was later sealed by a backfill layer of dark brown silty sand containing brick rubble (106). Modern (late-19th-/ 20th-century) CBM and tile fragments were recovered from these fills, but not retained. This cut is presumed to have been dug for the construction of the brick soakaway, although it is possible that it represents an earlier feature, such as a well, to which a lining was later added. A masonry drain/ culvert visible on the ground surface (Plate 6) led towards this soakaway from the extant coach house building directly to the south of the trench.
- 6.5.3 Quarry Pit [130] (Figure 3) was also uncovered in the western end of Trench 1 in the central part of site. The feature appeared to be rectangular in plan and steep-sided in profile. Pit [130] measured at least 0.26m in depth and yielded modern glass and CBM (not retained).
- 6.5.4 Quarry Pit [128] (Figure 3) was also uncovered at the western end of Trench 1. Despite largely being beyond the trench edge, Quarry Pit [128] was steep-sided in profile and likely rectangular in plan. The feature measured at least 0.22m in depth and yielded modern glass and CBM (not retained).

6.6 Modern

Pit [126] (Trench 1)

- 6.6.1 Pit [126] was uncovered in the middle of Trench 1, in the central part of the site. Despite largely being beyond the trench edge, Pit [126] was steep-sided in profile and probably rectangular in plan. Pit [126] measured at least 0.66m in depth and yielded modern CBM (not retained).

7 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

7.1 Post-Roman Pottery

By Chris Jarrett

Introduction

- 7.1.1 A total of two sherds (two estimated number of vessels (ENV); 62g) of post-Roman pottery were recovered by hand from the evaluation. The pottery is in a fragmentary state, but in good condition, and was probably deposited under secondary conditions.

Methodology

- 7.1.2 The pottery was quantified by sherd count (SC), estimated number of vessels (ENV) and weight. The assemblage was examined macroscopically and microscopically using a binocular microscope (x20), and recorded in a spreadsheet-format file by fabric, form and decoration. The pottery types have been classified according to Sperry (2016).

Distribution

Fill (116), Ditch [119] (Trench 1), spot date: 17th century?:

-Glazed red earthenware (GRE), AD 1500–1900, 1 sherd, 1 MNV, 7g, form: bowl, flared. Narrow, everted rim with a bevelled external edge and a triangular section cordon below, and two incised lines forming fine cordons below that. Internal and external glaze. Rim diameter: 220mm. 17th century?

-Huntingdon Late Medieval Calcareous ware (HUNCAL), AD 1300–1450, 1 sherd, 1 MNV, 24g, form: unidentified. Body sherd with an external off-white slip coating. Residual.

Discussion and Potential

- 7.1.3 The assemblage is of limited significance as the quantity of material is small and it is in a fragmentary condition. The composition of the assemblage is in keeping with post-Roman pottery assemblages found in the eastern region. The pottery has potential to date the deposit from which it was recovered. There are no recommendations for further work on the material.

7.2 Ceramic Building Material

By Kevin Hayward

Introduction and Methods

- 7.2.1 A small quantity of post-medieval building material (ceramic building material-brick) (five examples, 4123g) was recovered from an evaluation at the Old Rectory, March, Cambridgeshire. A review of the brick was undertaken to provide a list of spot dates for features and structures in Trenches 1 and 2.
- 7.2.2 The fabric was examined at x20 magnification using a long-arm stereomicroscope or hand lens (Gowland x10). As there was no pre-existing Cambridgeshire ceramic building material fabric collection, fabric type and code were determined by comparison with sites from other parts of March, e.g. Jobs Lane (Hayward 2019).

Local Clay Sources

- 7.2.3 Lying to the south of, but still within the Fenland gravel 'island' around March, the underlying sediments comprise geologically young (Pleistocene) periglacial sands and gravels of the March Gravels (Horton 1989, 19), part of the Crag Group.
- 7.2.4 The surrounding Oxford Clay has been, and continues to be, an excellent source of brick clay (Horton 1989, 33–4), used, for example, in the local Fletton brick of Peterborough. Local Pleistocene clays are also a likely source of material for bricks.

7.2.5 Ceramic Building Material (Brick)

Post-medieval (5 examples, 4123g)

- 7.2.6 All the post-medieval building material is brick. These came from the fill (117) of field/ plot boundary Ditch [119] in Trench 1 and a brick soakaway (124) in Trench 2. Two fabrics are represented.

Post-Great Fire Brick

3034R (AD 1664–1900)

A local version of the common London Post-Great Fire brick was recovered from the fill (117) of field/ plot boundary Ditch [119] in Trench 1. Although these bricks have a wide date range, the unfroged example from March appears narrow and quite well made, and it seems most likely that this example was manufactured after the national brick tax legislation was introduced in 1776 to reduce the size of bricks.

MAR12; MAR 12a (AD 1800–1925)

Examples of locally made, fine red sandy bricks, either with chaff impressions (MAR12a) or without (MAR12), were recovered from the fill (117) of field/ plot boundary Ditch [119] in Trench 1 and a brick soakaway (124) in Trench 2, respectively. These are comparable with fabric MAR 12 from Jobs Lane, March (Hayward 2019), where fragments were found in 19th- and 20th-century features.

The examples from the fill (117) of field/ plot boundary Ditch [119] have a gentle curved frog and almost certainly date from the mid–late 19th century into the first quarter of the 20th century. The large complete brick used in the soakaway (124) is adhered with a concretionary mortar (M1) typical of a similar Late Victorian–Edwardian date range.

Mortar

- 7.2.7 Attached to the large, locally made soakaway (124) brick in fabric MAR12a, from Trench 2, is an example of a mid- to late-19th-century concretionary-type mortar (Type 1) with small round inclusions of chalk, brick and coal (Table 1).

| Mortar Type | Description | Date and Use at ECB6046 |
|---|--|--|
| Type 1 Hard fawn-grey concretionary type mortar | Hard, fawn-grey concretionary type mortar with small round inclusions of brick, coal and chalk | Attached to large mid–late 19th-century soakaway brick fabric MAR12a (124) |

Table 1: Listing of mortar types from ECB6046

Distribution

| Context | Fabric | Form | Size | Date range of material | | Latest dated material | | Spot date | Spot date with mortar |
|---------|--------------|---|------|------------------------|------|-----------------------|------|-----------|-----------------------|
| | | | | | | | | | |
| 117 | 3034; MAR12a | Post-Great Fire brick and thick, local chaff-made very fine red sandy frogged brick | 4 | 1664 | 1925 | 1780 | 1925 | 1780–1925 | No mortar |
| 124 | MAR12; 3101 | Red brick, thick scraped unfrogged, bonded in a hard, concretionary type fawn-grey mortar with round brick, chalk and coal inclusions | 1 | 1800 | 1900 | 1850 | 1900 | 1850–1900 | 1850–1950 |

Table 2: Distribution of the ceramic building material

Review and Potential

- 7.2.8 Only brief comment is necessary for this review of the ceramic building material from evaluation at the Old Rectory, March, Cambridgeshire. Based on brick size, form, and the associated mortar, all can be dated from the mid–late 19th century into the first quarter of the 20th century. This includes the large brick used in Soakaway (124) in Trench 2, and frogged brick material dumped in Ditch [119] (117) in Trench 1. All the brick could easily be associated with the construction of the rectory, completed in 1882. The soakaway (124) formed part of a drain associated with the detached coach house building. It is possible that the post-Great Fire brick from (117) could relate to another Regency/Victorian building in the vicinity.
- 7.2.9 No further work is necessary. It is recommended that the ceramic building materials be discarded.

7.3 Clay Tobacco Pipe

By Chris Jarrett

Introduction

- 7.3.1 A small-sized assemblage of clay tobacco pipes (17 fragments, all stratified) was recovered by hand from the evaluation. The material is in a fragmentary but good condition and very little of the material appears to be residual, indicating that most of the assemblage was deposited soon after breakage. Clay tobacco pipes were found in three contexts as small-sized (under 30 fragments) groups. The tobacco pipes occur as three bowls, dated to the period c. AD 1660–1710 and 14 stems, probably also of late-17th-century date.

Methodology

- 7.3.2 The clay tobacco pipes were classified using Oswald's (1975) general typology (OS), recorded according to the guidelines recommended by Higgins (2017), and quantified by fragment count. The presence of milling on 17th-century bowls was noted. The quality of finish and burnish of the bowls was also noted. The data was entered in a spreadsheet format. Stems were only broadly dated according to the thickness of the stem and, more diagnostically, the size of the bore.

Contextual Analysis

7.3.3 The fragmentary, small-sized nature of the assemblage can be best described in the form of a catalogue:

Fill (116), Ditch [119], spot date: c. AD 1680–1710:

-One bowl of an OS9 shape (heeled, angled bowl with a straight back and rounded front), dated AD 1680–1710. The bowl is absent of makers' marks, has no milling on the bottered rim, and has an average finish. The item is notable for having a pale red firing flash on the stem, the base of the heel, and as a stripe on the back, right-side of the bowl.

-Two stem fragments of a medium thickness with medium-sized bores, probably late-17th-century in date.

Fill (120), Pit [121], spot date: c. late-17th-century:

-Three stem fragments of medium thickness with medium-sized bores, probably late-17th-century in date.

Fill (122), Treethrow [123], spot date: c. AD 1680–1710:

-One bowl, probably an OS18 type, dated AD 1660–80, but the spur (or heel) is missing. The bottered rim is fully milled. The bowl has been subjected to a very high-temperature (probably post-kiln firing) and the fabric is vitrified and has an external self-glaze. Fresh breaks.

-One bowl represented by a heel and a medium-thickness stem and medium-sized bore. Probably an OS8 type, dated AD 1680–1710.

-Nine stem fragments of a thin to medium thickness with medium-sized bores, probably late-17th-century in date.

Discussion

7.3.4 The assemblage is of no significance as the clay tobacco pipes generally occur in a fragmentary state and are absent of makers' marks. The clay tobacco pipes do have potential to date the deposits from which they were recovered. There are no recommendations for further work on the assemblage.

8 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The evaluation trenches identified post-medieval archaeological remains across the site.
- 8.2 The earliest features were a pit [121] and a treethrow [123], both in Trench 3, which contained late-17th-century clay pipe. Late-17th- to early-18th-century clay pipe fragments were also found residually in a ditch in Trench 1, together suggesting low-level activity on the site during this period.
- 8.3 Two perpendicular ditches in Trench 1 ([114] and [119]) are likely to be former plot/ field boundaries. One of these [119] contained 19th-century brick fragments, together with residual 17th-century pottery and clay tobacco pipe. The other ditch did not contain any finds, but its perpendicular alignment to [119] suggests that it may be broadly contemporary and part of the same system of land division. These ditches probably date to the period before the expansion of the built-up area of the town onto land east of the High Street in the later 19th century. They were perpendicular and parallel to the High Street, to the west, and probably represent former plot or field boundaries.
- 8.4 Other features recorded in the trenches are likely to relate to the construction of the Old Rectory in the late 19th century (completed in 1882 according to its date plaque). These include the brick soakaway in Trench 2 (124), which was connected to the extant coach house building, and two gravel quarry pits in Trench 1 ([128] and [130]), which may have been dug to extract ad hoc construction materials.
- 8.5 A single residual sherd of late medieval pottery (c. AD 1300–1450) was found in Ditch [119].
- 8.6 Based on the evaluation results, the potential of the site for significant preserved archaeological deposits is fairly low and extends no earlier than the late 17th century. Development of the site for new houses is therefore suggested to have minimal archaeological impact. The evaluation has nevertheless provided useful information regarding the development of this part of March.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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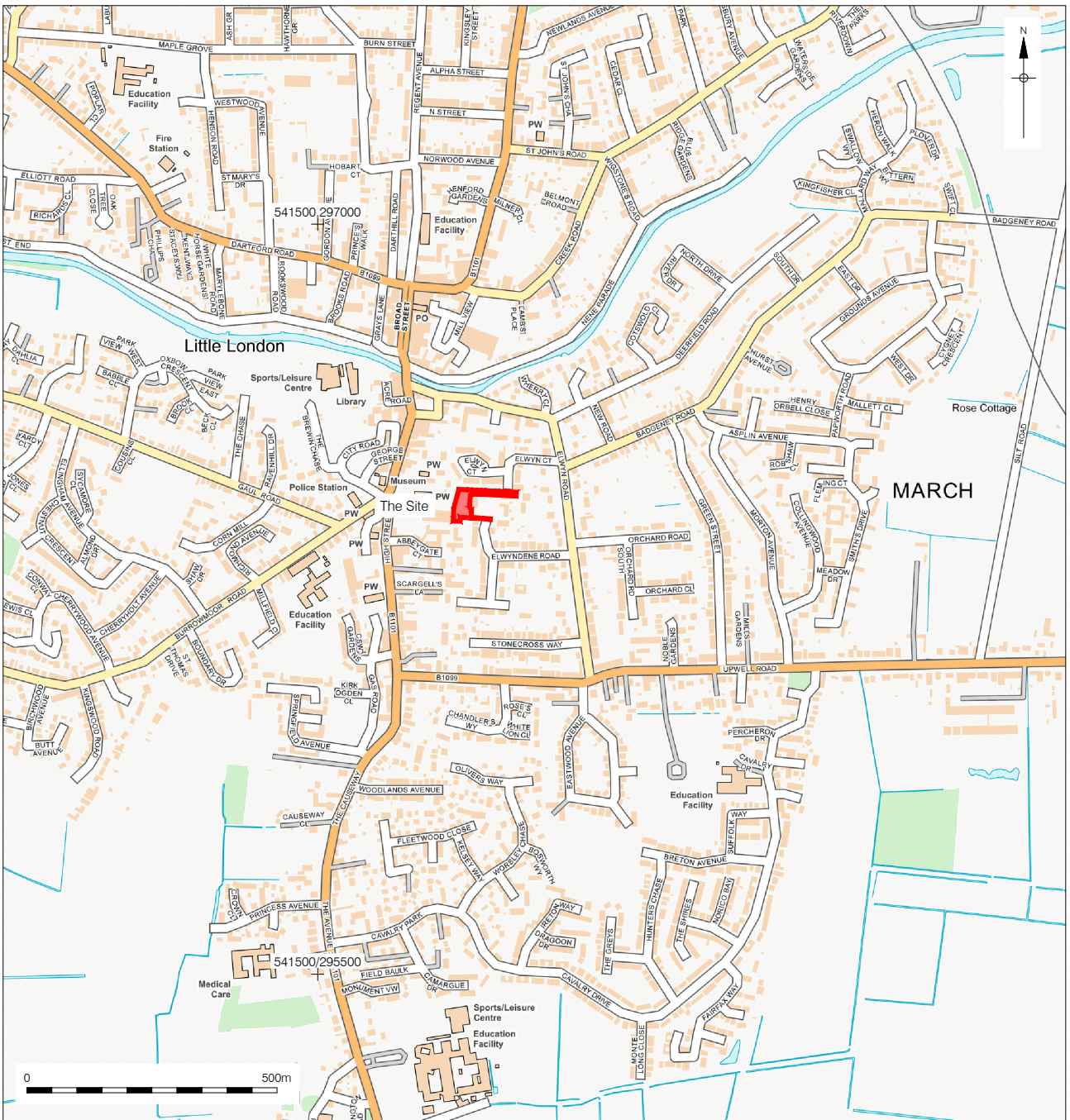
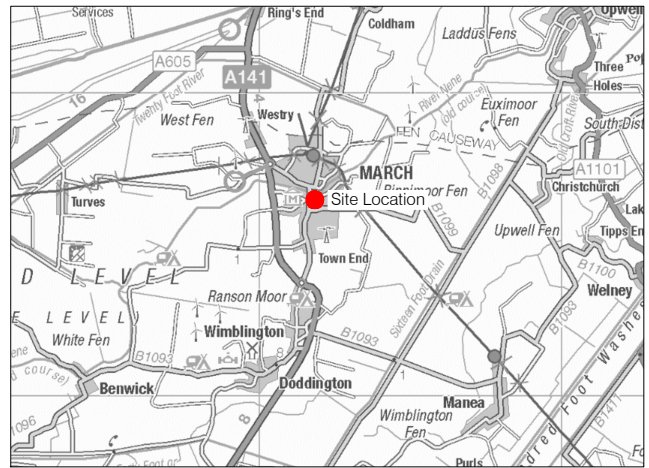
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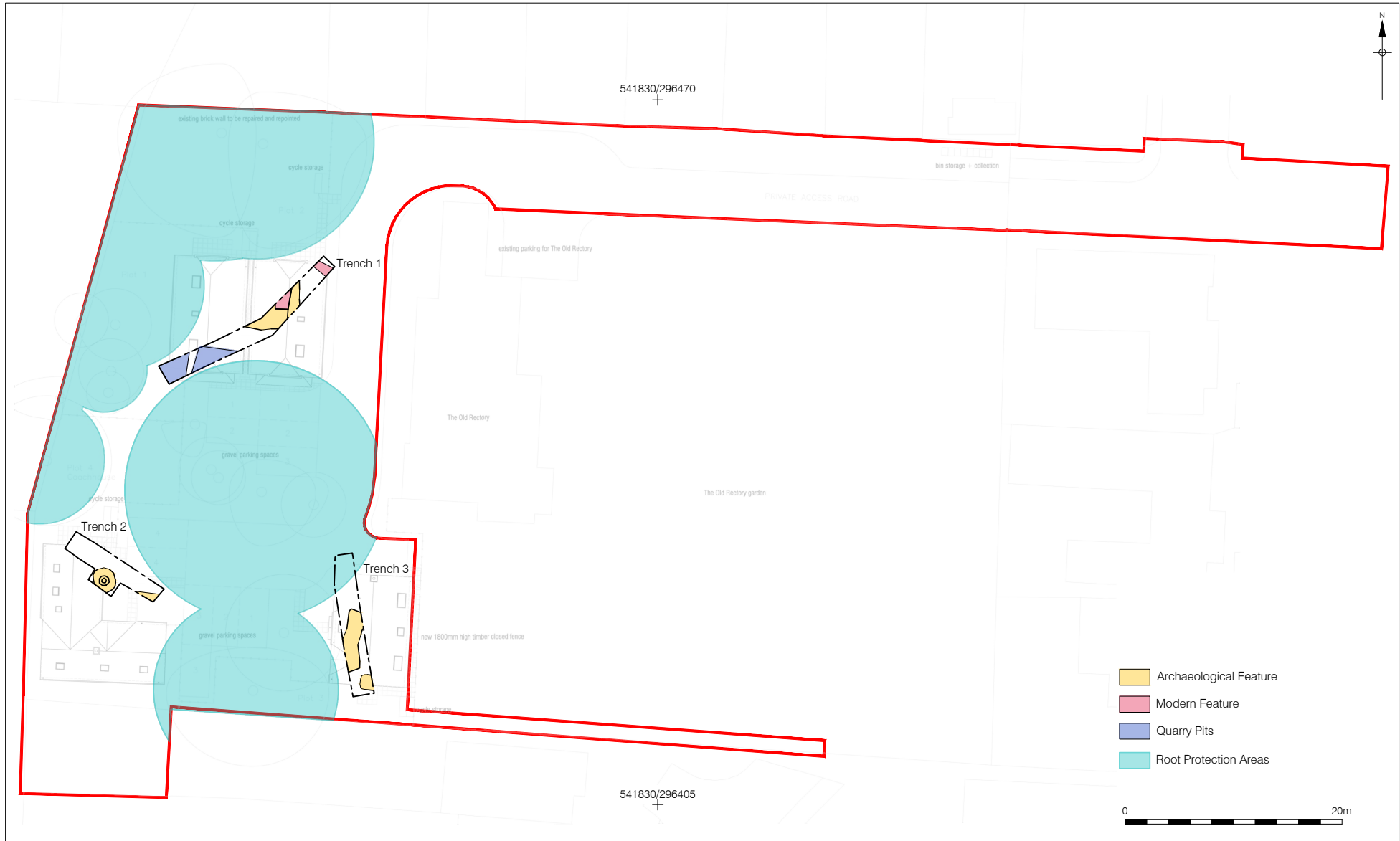
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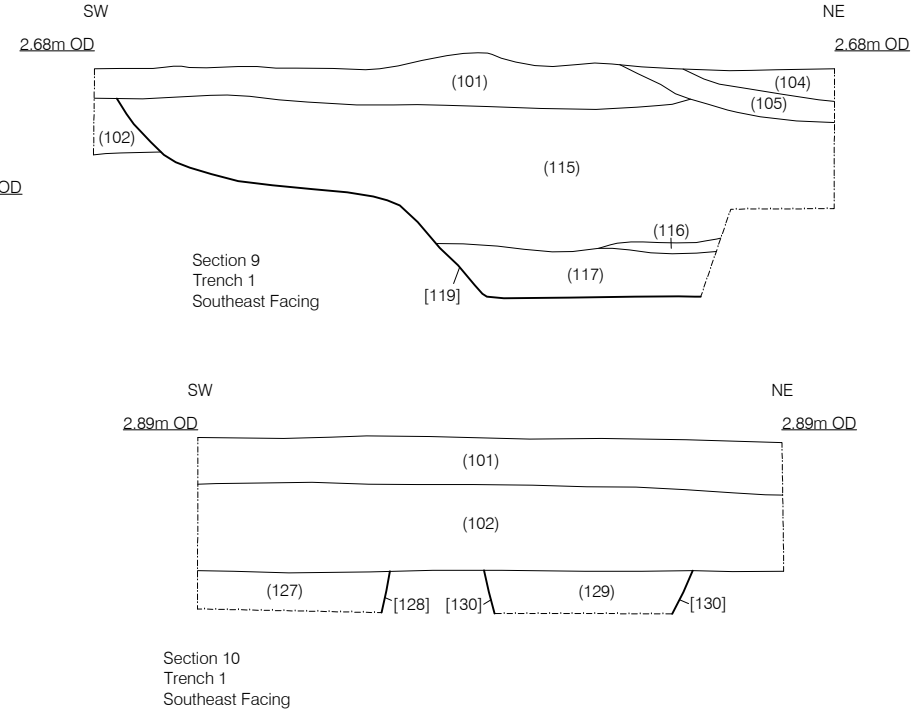
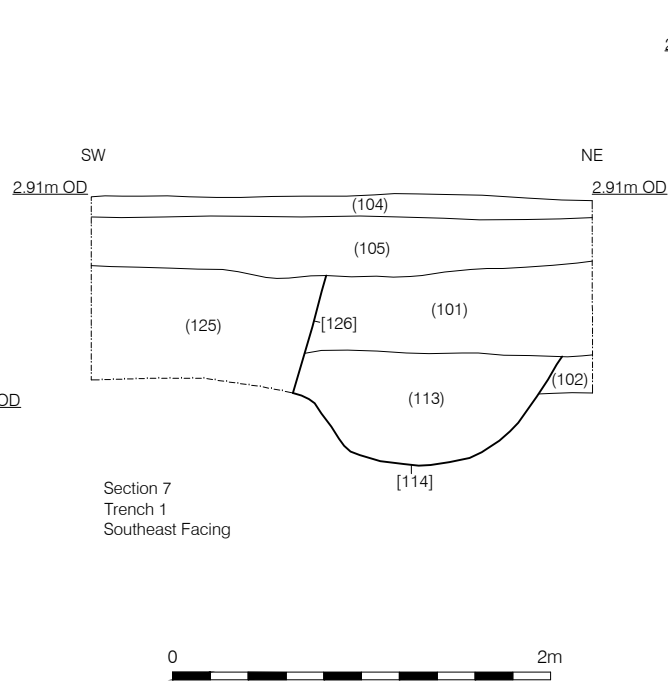
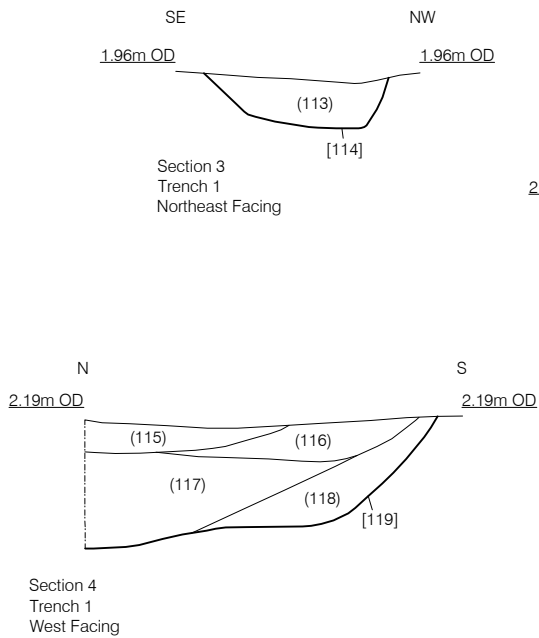
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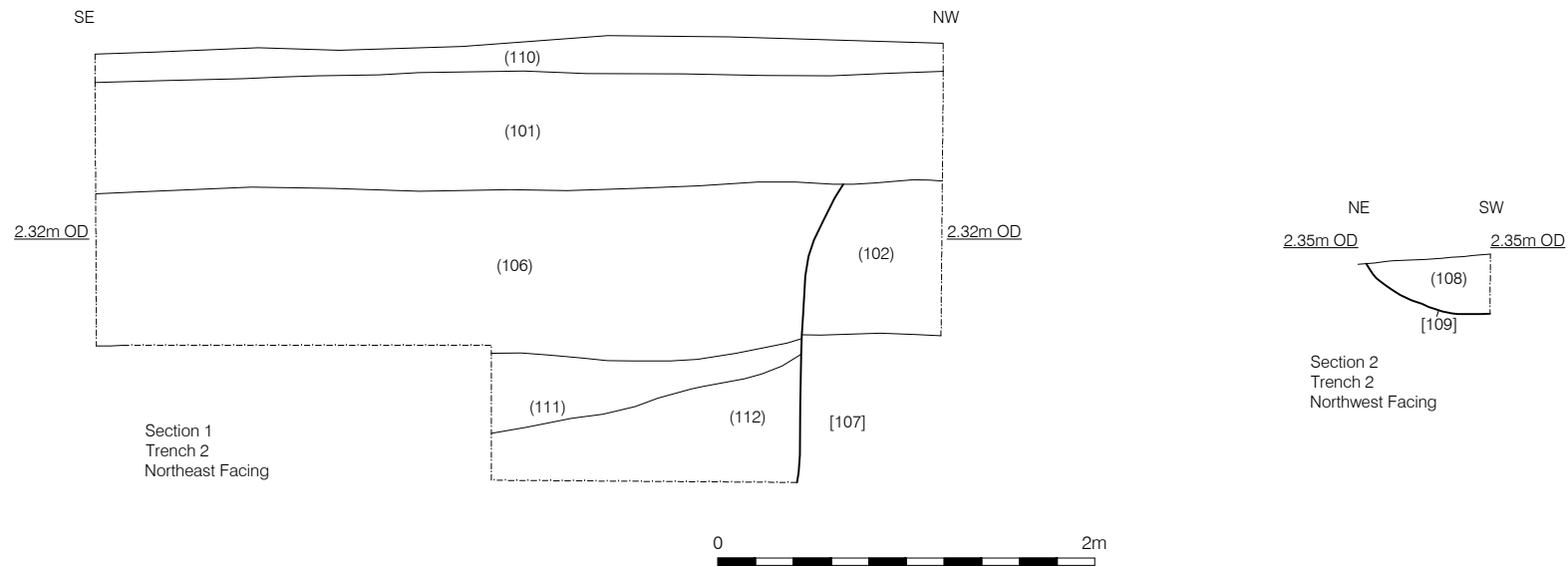
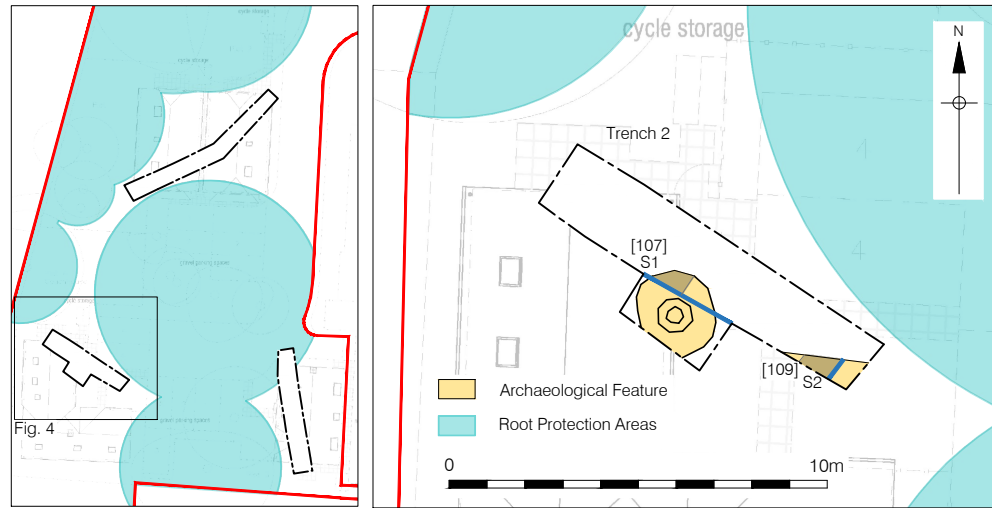
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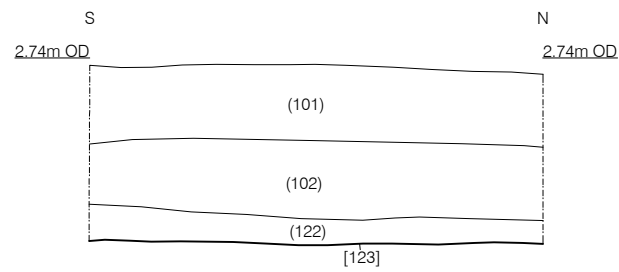
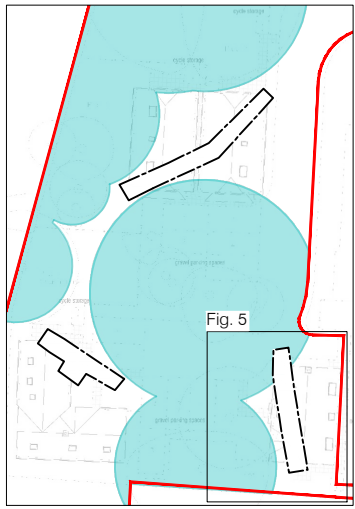
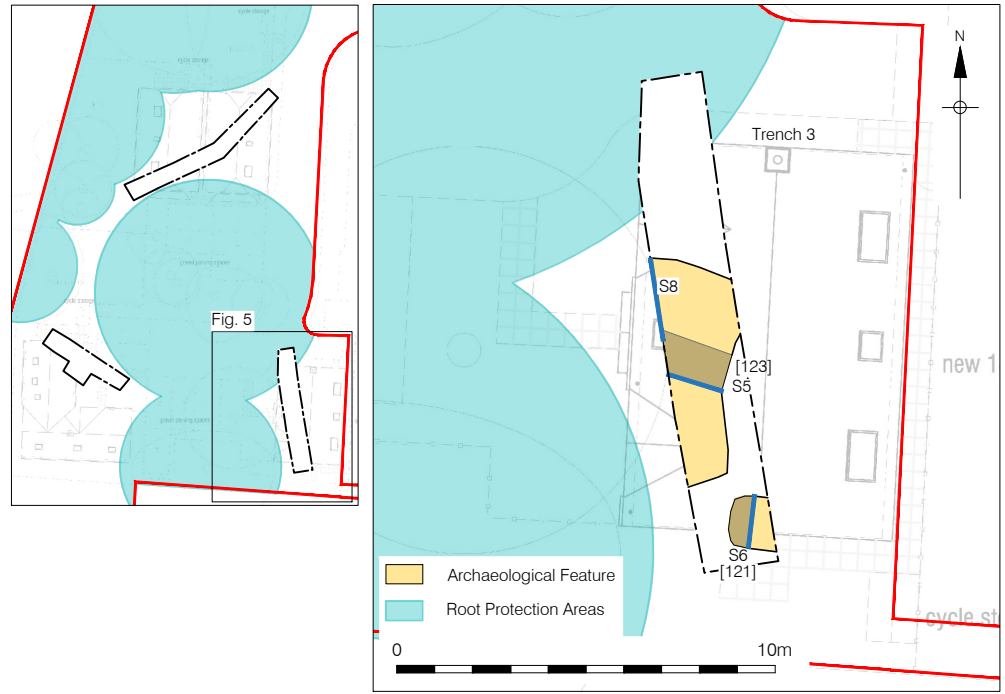
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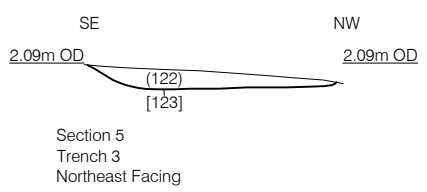




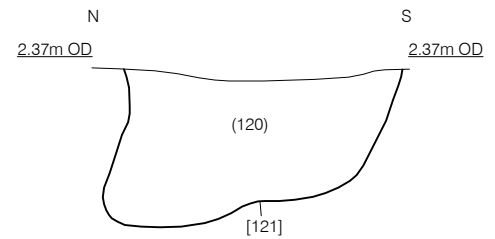




Section 8
Trench 3
East Facing



Section 5
Trench 3
Northeast Facing



Section 6
Trench 3
West Facing



11 APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: Site shot, view south towards coach house



Plate 2: Opening Trench 1, view north-east



Plate 3: Trench 3, view north



Plate 4: Soakaway (124) with coach house, view south



Plate 5: Soakaway (124) (Trench 2), view south-west



Plate 6: Drain leading from coach house to Soakaway (124)



Plate 7: Ditch [114] (Trench 1), view north



Plate 8: Ditch [119] (Trench 1), view east

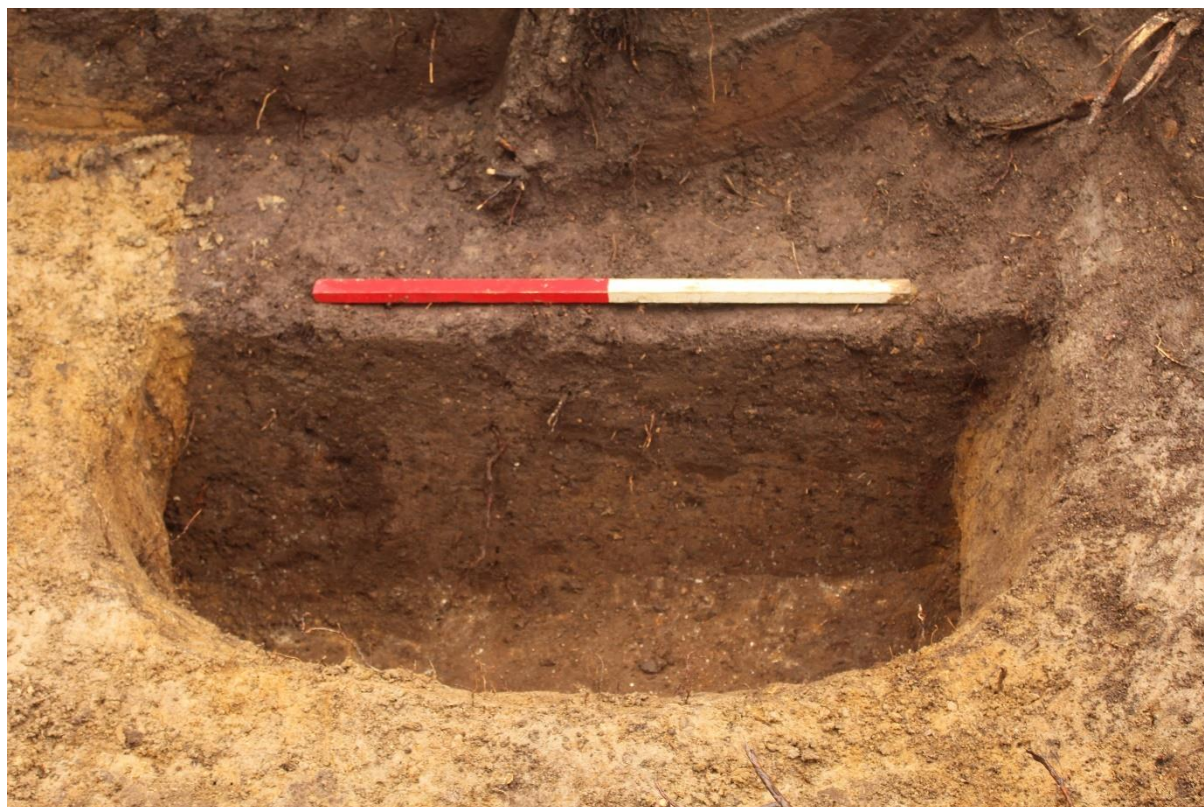


Plate 9: Pit [121] (Trench 3), view east

12 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

| Site Code | Context No | Cut | Trench | Type | Category |
|-----------|------------|-----|--------|---------|-------------|
| ECB6046 | 101 | 0 | 0 | Layer | Topsoil |
| ECB6046 | 102 | 0 | 0 | Layer | Subsoil |
| ECB6046 | 103 | 0 | 0 | Layer | Natural |
| ECB6046 | 104 | 0 | 1 | Layer | Made Ground |
| ECB6046 | 105 | 0 | 1 | Layer | Made Ground |
| ECB6046 | 106 | 107 | 2 | Fill | Soak Away |
| ECB6046 | 107 | 0 | 2 | Cut | Soak Away |
| ECB6046 | 108 | 109 | 2 | Fill | Treethrow |
| ECB6046 | 109 | 0 | 2 | Cut | Treethrow |
| ECB6046 | 110 | 0 | 2 | Layer | Made Ground |
| ECB6046 | 111 | 107 | 2 | Fill | Soak Away |
| ECB6046 | 112 | 107 | 2 | Fill | Soak Away |
| ECB6046 | 113 | 114 | 1 | Fill | Ditch |
| ECB6046 | 114 | 0 | 1 | Cut | Ditch |
| ECB6046 | 115 | 119 | 1 | Fill | Ditch |
| ECB6046 | 116 | 119 | 1 | Fill | Ditch |
| ECB6046 | 117 | 119 | 1 | Fill | Ditch |
| ECB6046 | 118 | 119 | 1 | Fill | Ditch |
| ECB6046 | 119 | 0 | 1 | Cut | Ditch |
| ECB6046 | 120 | 121 | 3 | Fill | Pit |
| ECB6046 | 121 | 0 | 3 | Cut | Pit |
| ECB6046 | 122 | 123 | 3 | Fill | Treethrow |
| ECB6046 | 123 | 0 | 3 | Cut | Treethrow |
| ECB6046 | 124 | 107 | 2 | Masonry | Soak Away |
| ECB6046 | 125 | 126 | 1 | Fill | Pit |
| ECB6046 | 126 | 0 | 1 | Cut | Pit |

13 APPENDIX 3: TRENCH TABLES

| TRENCH 1 | Figures 2 and 3 | Trench Alignment: SW–NE | |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Length: 19m | Width: 1.8m | Level of Natural (m OD): 1.98–2.17m | |
| Deposit | Context No. | Max. Thickness (m) | |
| | | SW End | NE End |
| Made Ground (sand and crushed brick carpark surface) | (104) | - | 0.11m |
| Made Ground (mid-yellow gravel levelling layer) | (105) | - | 0.32m |
| Topsoil | (101) | 0.29m | 0.5m |
| Subsoil | (102) | 0.42m | 0.18 |
| Natural | (103) | 0.71m+ | 1.11m+ |
| <p>Summary</p> <p>Trench 1 was located in the central area of site.</p> <p>The trench contained two post-medieval (18th-/19th-century?) ditches on broadly perpendicular east–west [119] and north–south [114] alignments and two late-19th-century quarry pits ([128] and [130]) likely to be associated with construction of the Old Rectory, as well as modern disturbance [126] and levelling layers (104) and (105) for the former car park of the Old Rectory.</p> | | | |

| TRENCH 2 | Figures 2 and 4 | Trench Alignment: NW–SE | |
|--|-----------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| Length: 11m | Width: 2m | Level of Natural (m OD): 2.11m | |
| Deposit | Context No. | Max. Thickness (m) | |
| | | NW End | SE End |
| Made Ground | (110) | 0.15m | 0.37m |
| Topsoil | (101) | 0.15m | 0.15m |
| Subsoil | (102) | 0.08m | - |
| Natural | (103) | 0.38m+ | 0.52m+ |
| <p>Summary</p> <p>Trench 1 was located in the south-western part of the site.</p> <p>The trench contained a Victorian brick soakaway (124) connected with the extant coach house building directly to the south, and a probable treethrow [109].</p> | | | |

| TRENCH 3 | Figures 2 and 5 | Trench Alignment: NW–SE | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Length: 13m | Width: 2m | Level of Natural (m OD): 2.11–2.23m | |
| Deposit | Context No. | Max. Thickness (m) | |
| | | NW End | SE End |

| | | | |
|---------|-------|--------|--------|
| Topsoil | (101) | 0.43m | 0.40m |
| Subsoil | (102) | 0.46m | 0.41m |
| Natural | (103) | 0.89m+ | 0.81m+ |

Summary

Trench 1 was located in the south-eastern part of the site.

The trench contained a shallow treethrow [123] and a pit [121], both of which contained late-17th-century clay pipe.

OASIS ID: preconst1-371336

Project details

| | |
|--|--|
| Project name | The Old Rectory, March, Cambs Evaluation |
| Short description of the project | This report details the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation undertaken in advance of residential development on land west of the Old Rectory, March, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 4179 9644). The archaeological fieldwork was carried out between 12th and 14th November 2019. The three trial trenches were within the former grounds of the Old Rectory and contained evidence for activity relating to the construction of the Old Rectory and the associated detached coach house in the 1880s. Finds of clay tobacco pipe in a pit and a treethrow in Trench 3, as well as residual in one of the ditches in Trench 1, suggest a low level of activity on the site during the late 17th/ early 18th centuries. Two perpendicular ditches in the middle of the site (Trench 1) may be field/ plot boundaries from the period before the built-up part of the town expanded eastwards from the High Street in the later 19th century. Other features and deposits, including a brick soakaway in Trench 2 and two quarry pits in Trench 1, were associated with the construction of the Old Rectory and coach house. A single residual late medieval (AD 1300-1450) potsherd was found in one of the ditches in Trench 1. |
| Project dates | Start: 12-11-2019 End: 14-11-2019 |
| Previous/future work | No / No |
| Any associated project reference codes | F/YR16/0637/F - Planning Application No. |
| Any associated project reference codes | ECB6046 - HER event no. |
| Type of project | Field evaluation |
| Site status | None |
| Current Land use | Other 5 - Garden |
| Monument type | DITCH Post Medieval |
| Monument type | SOAKAWAY Post Medieval |
| Monument type | QUARRY PIT Post Medieval |
| Significant Finds | CLAY PIPE Post Medieval |
| Significant Finds | POTTERY Post Medieval |
| Significant Finds | BRICK Post Medieval |
| Significant Finds | POTTERY Medieval |
| Methods & techniques | ""Sample Trenches"" |
| Development type | Rural residential |
| Prompt | Planning condition |
| Position in the planning process | After outline determination (eg. As a reserved matter) |

Project location

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Country | England |
| Site location | CAMBRIDGESHIRE FENLAND MARCH Land West of The Old Rectory, March, Cambridgeshire |
| Postcode | PE15 9BZ |
| Study area | 0.25 Hectares |
| Site coordinates | TL 4179 9644 52.546933759626 0.09128971189 52 32 48 N 000 05 28 E Point |
| Height OD / Depth | Min: 4m Max: 4m |

Project creators

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Name of Organisation | PCA Central |
| Project brief originator | Gemma Stewart |
| Project design originator | Tom Woolhouse |
| Project director/manager | Tom Woolhouse |
| Project supervisor | Harvey Furniss |
| Type of sponsor/funding body | Developer |
| Name of sponsor/funding body | Kingston (March) Limited |

Project archives

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Physical Archive recipient | CCC County Archaeology Store |
| Physical Archive ID | ECB6046 |
| Physical Contents | "Ceramics" |
| Digital Archive recipient | CCC County Archaeology Store |
| Digital Archive ID | ECB6046 |
| Digital Contents | "Ceramics","Survey" |
| Digital Media available | "Database","Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text" |
| Paper Archive recipient | CCC County Archaeology Store |
| Paper Archive ID | ECB6046 |
| Paper Contents | "Stratigraphic","Survey" |
| Paper Media available | "Context sheet","Drawing","Plan","Report","Section","Survey","Unpublished Text" |

Project bibliography 1

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Publication type | Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript) |
| Title | Land West of The Old Rectory, March, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation |
| Author(s)/Editor(s) | Furniss, H. |
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