

**LAND AT FODDER FEN ROAD,
MANEA, CAMBRIDGESHIRE:**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

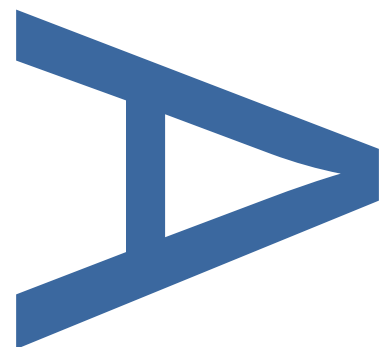
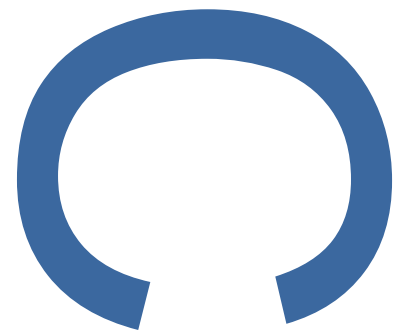
**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:
FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PLANNING APPLICATION REF:
PRE-PLANNING**

SITE CODE: ECB6045

REPORT NO: R13944

NOVEMBER 2019



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

Land at Fodder Fen Road, Manea, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation

Local Planning Authority: Fenland District Council

Planning Reference: Pre-Application

Central National Grid Reference: NGR TL 4794 9118

Accession Number/Site code: ECB6045

Oasis reference no: preconst1-374789

Report No. R13944

Written and researched by: Harvey Furniss

Project Manager: Christiane Meckseper

Commissioning Client: Fenland District Council

Contractor: Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Central Office
The Granary Rectory Farm
Brewery Road
Pampisford
Cambridgeshire
CB22 3EN

Tel: 01223 845522

E-mail: cmeckseper@pre-construct.com

Website: www.pre-construct.com

**©Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
November 2019**

The material contained herein is and remains the sole property of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd and is not for publication to third parties without prior consent. Whilst every effort has been made to provide detailed and accurate information, Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd cannot be held responsible for errors or inaccuracies herein contained.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	2
ABSTRACT	4
1 INTRODUCTION	5
2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	6
3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	7
4 METHODOLOGY	9
5 QUANTIFICATION OF ARCHIVE.....	11
6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS	12
7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS.....	14
8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	15
9 BIBLIOGRAPHY	16
10 FIGURES	17
11 APPENDIX 1: PLATES	20
12 APPENDIX 2: TRENCH TABLES	26
13 APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM	29
FIGURE 1 SITE LOCATION	17
FIGURE 2 TRENCH LOCATIONS	18
FIGURE 3 SECTIONS	19
PLATE 1: SITE SHOT; VIEW NORTH-WEST	20
PLATE 2: WORKING SHOT; VIEW SOUTH-WEST	20
PLATE 3: LAND DRAIN [104]; VIEW EAST	21
PLATE 4: LAND DRAIN [106]; VIEW WEST	21
PLATE 5: TRENCH 1; VIEW EAST	22
PLATE 6: TRENCH 2; VIEW SOUTH SOUTH-EAST	22
PLATE 7: TRENCH 3; VIEW NORTH-EAST	23
PLATE 8: TRENCH 4; VIEW SOUTH	23
PLATE 9: TRENCH 5; VIEW SOUTH-EAST	24

PLATE 10: TRENCH 6; VIEW NORTH-WEST..... 24
PLATE 11: TRENCH 7; VIEW SOUTH-WEST..... 25

ABSTRACT

This report details the results of a trial trench evaluation undertaken in advance of developments on the land at Fodder Fen Road, Manea, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 4794 9118)). The evaluation site is a triangular-shaped parcel of land located to the immediate east of Manea railway station and adjacent to Fodder Fen Road. The archaeological fieldwork was carried out on the 19th and 20th November 2019.

Prehistoric settlement is prominent on the gravel islands at Manea to the south and Stonea to the north and scatters of flint artefacts have been recorded in the vicinity of the site. Despite this, no archaeological features were revealed on the development site.

Bucket sampling of the topsoil and subsoil retrieved a number of late 19th/early 20th century finds most likely refuse from the railway line and Station Farm to the immediate west and north. No worked flint was present in the topsoil and subsoil and the two land drains excavated.

It is possible that the location of the site at the very edge of the gravel promontory was too marginal for settlement.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land at Fodder Fen Road, Manea, Cambridgeshire (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 4794 9118) on the 19th and 20th November 2019 (Figure 1; Plate 1).
- 1.2 Due to the high archaeological potential of the site, Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CHET) advised that an archaeological evaluation would be required for the site. This is in line with National Planning Policy Framework 2019 Chapter 16 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', and in accordance with Policy LP18 'Historic Environment and Heritage Assets' of the Fenland Local Plan, adopted May 2014.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Christiane Meckseper of PCA (Meckseper 2019) in response to a Brief for archaeological evaluation issued by Kerry Hopper (Hopper 2019) of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET).
- 1.4 The aim of the evaluation was to determine the location, date, extent, character, condition and quality of any archaeological remains on the site, to assess the significance of any such remains in a local, regional, or national context, as appropriate, and to assess the potential impact of the development proposals on the site's archaeology.
- 1.5 A total of seven evaluation trenches totalling 200m of trenches 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 Council depository.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Site Location

- 2.1.1 The proposed development site lies at the northern edge of the village of Manea and immediately north of Manea Station. It comprises a c.0.9ha triangular parcel of land that is currently put to pasture. The site is on level ground at c. 1m AOD. The site is bounded by Fodder Fen Road to the east, the railway line to the west and Station Farm to the north.

2.2 Geology

- 2.2.1 The British Geological Survey Online records the bedrock within the site as Ampthill Clay Formation mudstone with superficial deposits of Oadby Member - Diamicton, which comprises 'subordinate lenses of sand and gravel, clay and silt. Clay, brown to grey, and silty clay, with chalk and flint fragments' (BGS 2019).

2.3 Topography

- 2.3.1 The proposed development site occupies the edge of Manea Island, a small gravel island that extends northwards from the village of Manea. The site is on level ground at 1m AOD.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1 The following archaeological background is taken from Cambridge Historic Environment Record (CHER) data of a 1km search radius around the proposed development site, supplied with the brief. Numbers in brackets in the following text are CHER record numbers.
- 3.1.2 The majority of HER records around the proposed development site date to the early prehistoric period. The site lies on a finger of gravel within the low-lying Fenland basin that extends from Manea Island in the south to Stonea Island in the north. In the prehistoric period these islands and ridges of higher land, and others like it in the Fens, would have remained accessible in an increasingly flooded environment and hence attracted settlement (Hopper 2019). The proposed development site lies on the very eastern edge of a gravel ridge but at a fairly low elevation of 1m above Ordnance Datum (AOD).
- 3.1.3 The closest known findspot to the site is a scatter of Mesolithic (10,000BC - 4001BC) flint blades, one axe, two microliths and a fire cracked pebble 345m to the east of the site. Further isolated findspots of Mesolithic flint axes are located 425m and 625m to the west of the site (MCB15986 and MCB15984 respectively). Concentrations of Mesolithic flints (05977 and 05971) were found 850m to the south-west and 965m to the south-east.
- 3.1.4 A round barrow, most likely dating to the Bronze Age period, is located c.1km to the west of the site (05964). Excavations undertaken near Wimblington Road on another Bronze Age barrow (07806) revealed burials and cremations with a variety of grave goods (07806).
- 3.1.5 There are no finds dating from the Iron Age, Roman, medieval or post-medieval periods within the 1km search radius of the site. Post-medieval heritage assets are in the form of 19th century buildings, including the now demolished 19th century Manea Railway Station (MCB27164) and Railway Tavern (MCB 27163) to the immediate south of the site, and the Station Farmhouse (MCB 27165) to its immediate north.
- 3.1.6 The Great Eastern Railway (Ely & Peterbrough Branch) (MCB24025) was

opened in 1847 linking the line from Norwich with Peterborough. It remains in use to the present day.

- 3.1.7 Historic maps show that the proposed development site comprised pasture or agricultural land with no known buildings since at least 1886.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 General

4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation comprised one 2m x 50m trench and six 2m x 25m trial trenches, totalling 200m. These were distributed evenly across the site in order to provide a representative sample of the development area. Legal stand-offs were kept from the overhead power cables running through site and the potential location of a badger sett in the north eastern corner.

4.2 Excavation methodology

4.2.1 Ground reduction during the evaluation was carried out using a 12.5 ton 360° tracked mechanical excavator was used to strip the excavation area (Plate 2). 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 All trenches were excavated with at least one sloped end for the consideration of the local fauna.

4.2.3 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 Geomax Zenith 15 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. 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. Sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 of all features excavated as well as representative sections of each trench (Figure 3).

4.4 Sampling Strategy

4.4.1 A strategy of "bucket sampling" was undertaken throughout the topsoil and subsoil overburden of all seven trenches in order to recover any unstratified finds of note. The finds will not be detained for accession.

5 QUANTIFICATION OF ARCHIVE

5.1 Paper Archive

Context register sheets	1
Context sheets	7
Section register sheets	1
Sections at 1:10	6
Trench record sheets	7
Photo register sheets	1

5.2 Digital Archive

Digital photos	77
GPS survey files	1
Digital plans	1
Access database	1

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

6.1 Overburden and Natural Geological Deposits

- 6.1.1 The topsoil (100) was observed across all seven trenches. It consisted of a loose, dark greyish-blue sandy silt and increased in thickness from 0.2m at the north of the site to 0.46m at the south. Finds retrieved from the topsoil were mostly modern glazed pottery sherds along with seven animal bone fragments and a fragment of clay tobacco pipe (see below).
- 6.1.2 Subsoil (101) was a layer of firm, mid brownish-grey sandy silt with a high level of rooting and bioturbation. It ranged in thickness from 0.04-0.09m in most trenches to 0.34m at the western edge of site. No finds were present within the subsoil.
- 6.1.3 It is possible that the varying levels of thickness of the overburden are related to construction activity of the railway along the western and southern edge of site. Soil may have been banked up to construct the railway embankment and the trenches are located at the very edge of this.
- 6.1.4 The natural geology (102) was a firm, mottled yellowish-grey sandy clay with frequent lenses of light blueish-grey clay.

6.2 Bucket Sampling

- 6.2.1 Bucket sampling was undertaken in the topsoil and subsoil across the evaluation works. The results identified material no earlier in date than the late 19th/early 20th century. The pottery exclusively consisted of white glazed ceramic wares and blue willow pattern. The archaeological finds observed from the topsoil most likely represent refuse from Station Farm or the railway to the immediate north and west of the site. They were not retained.

Bucket Sampling Finds

Trench Number	Context	Finds Type	Material	Object Name	Weight (g)	Number of Fragments
1	100	Bulk	CBM	-	107.5	1
1	100	Bulk	Bone	Animal Bone	30.5	6
2	100	Bulk	Pottery	-	59.5	5

3	100	Bulk	Pottery	-	186	4
5	100	Bulk	Pottery	-	24	1
6	100	Bulk	Bone	Animal Bone	40.5	1
6	100	Bulk	Clay Pipe	-	3.5	1

6.3 Modern Features

Land Drains [104] and [106] (Figures 2 and 3)

- 6.3.1 Land Drain [104] was uncovered in the northern end of Trench 4 and ran on an east-west alignment. The linear feature measured at 0.78m in width and 0.23m in depth (Plate 3). No finds were recovered.
- 6.3.2 Land Drain [106] was uncovered towards the southern end of Trench 4 and ran on an east-west alignment. The linear feature measured at 0.94m in width and 0.24m in depth (Plate 4). No finds were recovered.
- 6.3.3 Both features continued eastwards across the site and were also observed in Trenches 5 and 6.

7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Manea and Stonea Islands have been well documented for their prominence in Cambridgeshire's prehistoric fen landscape. Local excavations and find spots have previously shown evidence for significant settlements on both Manea and Stonea islands. Despite this, no archaeological features were revealed on the development site itself, and bucket sampling of the topsoil and subsoil showed a distinct lack of artefacts pre-dating the late 19th/early 20th century. It is possible that the location of the site at the very edge of the gravel promontory was too marginal for settlement.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank the Fenland District council for commissioning and funding the work. PCA are also grateful to Kerry Hopper of the Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team for monitoring the work on behalf of the Local Planning Authority. The project was managed for PCA by Christiane Meckseper and was supervised by Harvey Furniss. The author would like to thank Cleve Roberts for his hard work on site. Figures accompanying this report were prepared by Rosie Scales of PCA's CAD Department.

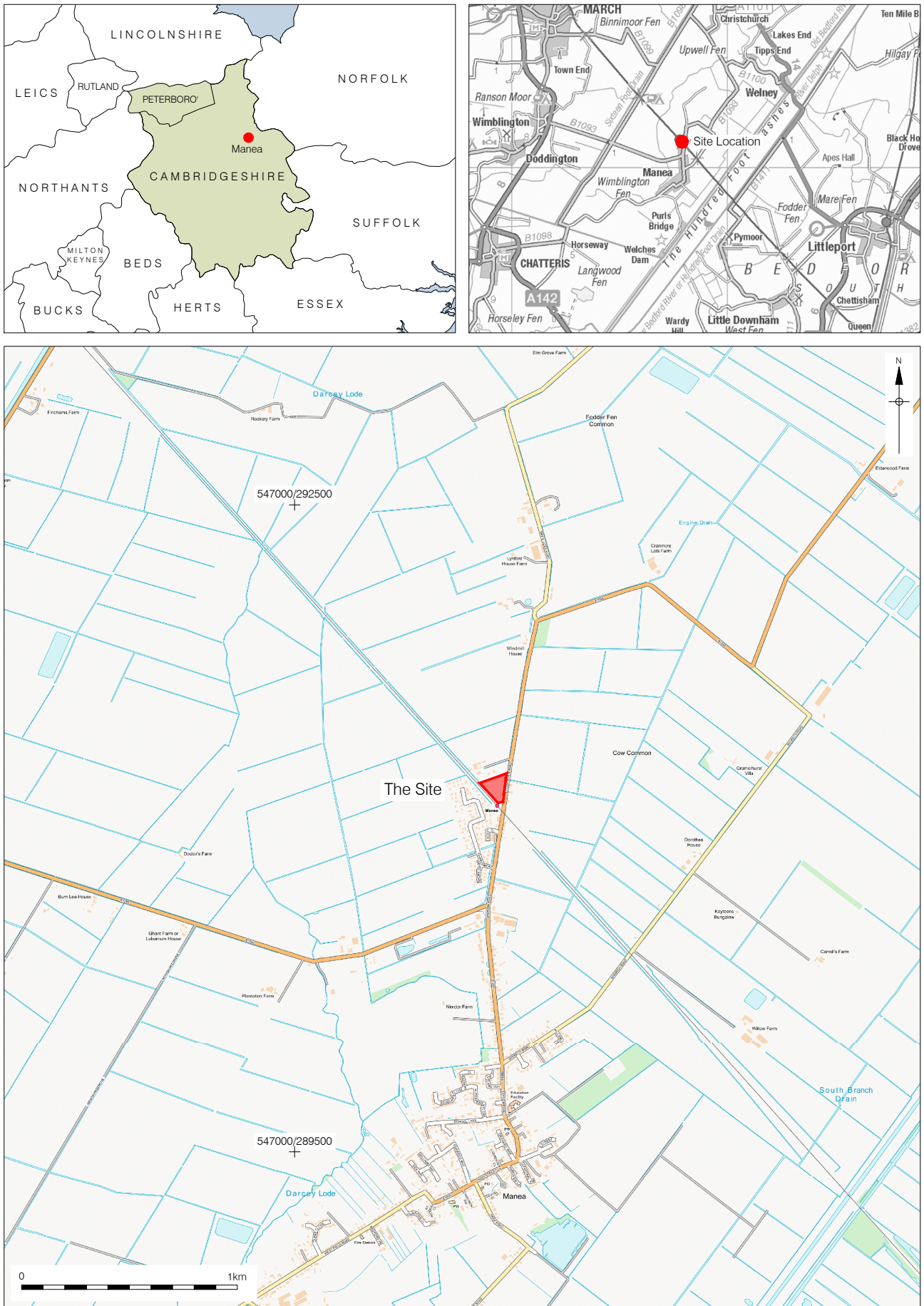
9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

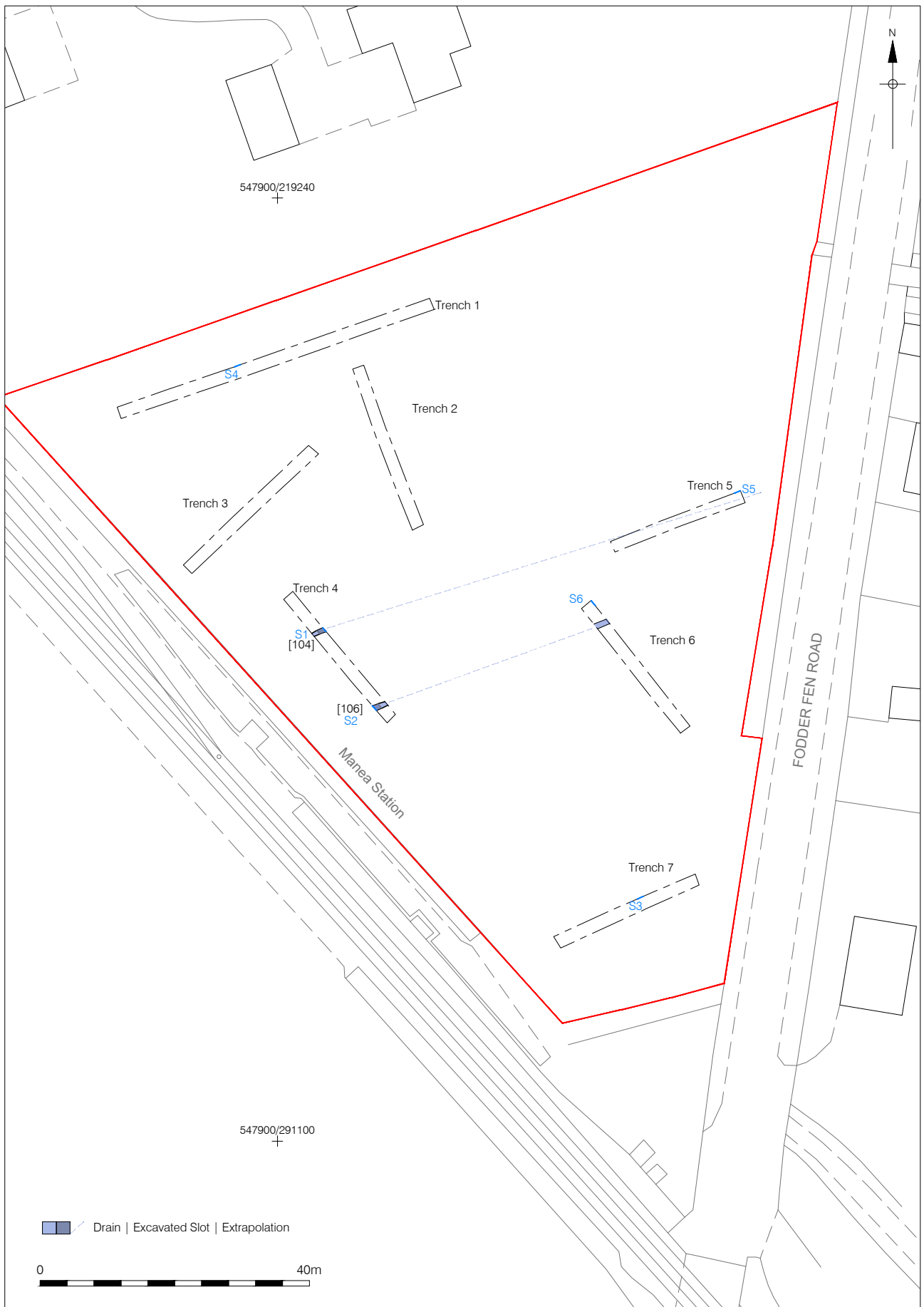
Barrett, J. 1980. The pottery of the later Bronze Age in lowland England. Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society, Vol. 46, 297-319 (Format Style: plain).

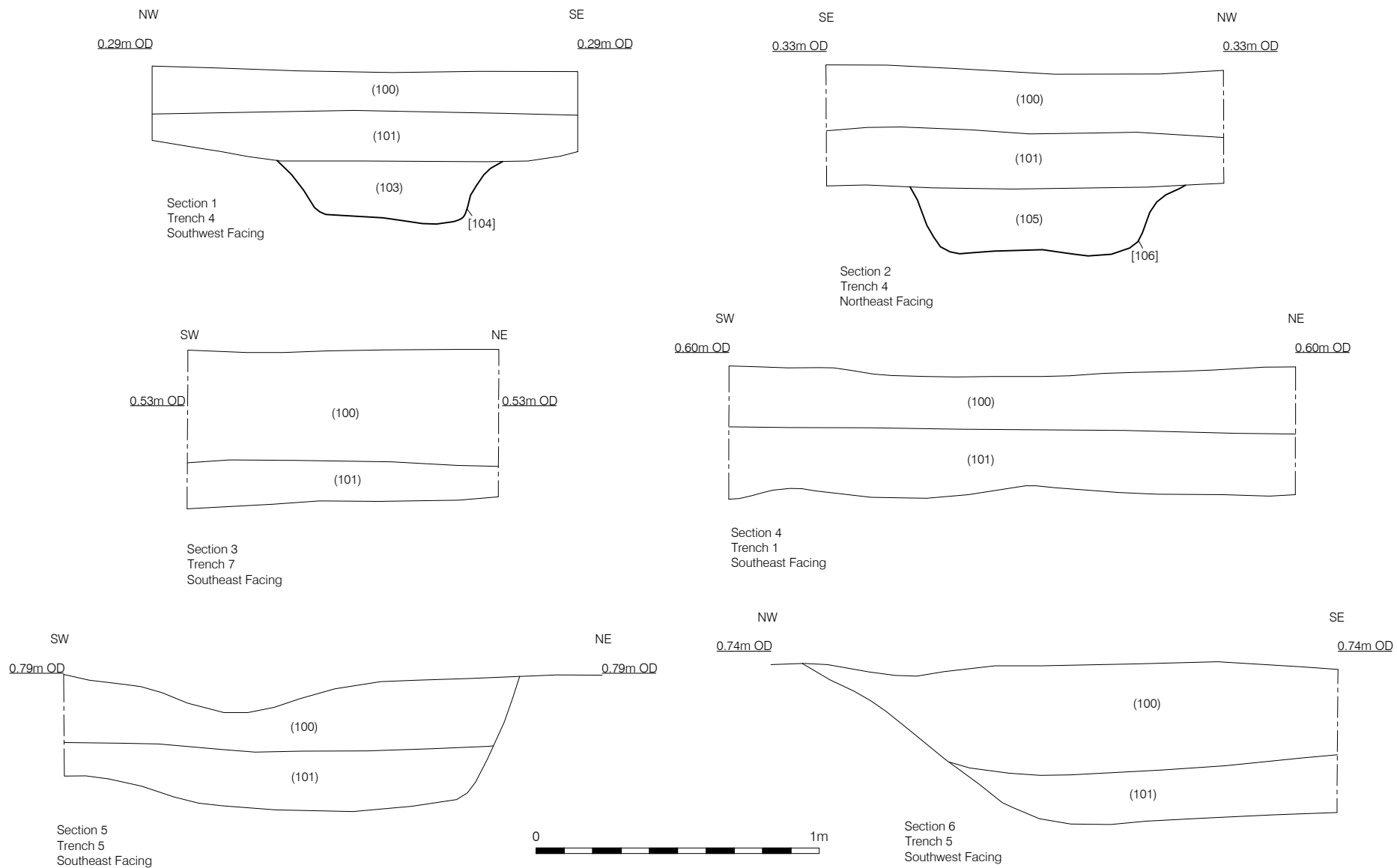
British Geological Survey, 2014. Geology of Britain Viewer <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html?location=IP9%203DG.A> accessed 31/07/14

Hopper, K. 2019 Brief for Archaeological Evaluation. Bungalow Station Farm, Fodder Fen Road, Manea. Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team 18 September 2019

Meckseper, C. 2019 Land at Fodder Fen Road, Manea, Cambridgeshire. Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Evaluation. Pre-Construct Archaeology October 2019







11 APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: Site shot; view north-west



Plate 2: Working shot; view south-west



Plate 3: Land Drain [104]; view east



Plate 4: Land Drain [106]; view west



Plate 5: Trench 1; view east



Plate 6: Trench 2; view south south-east



Plate 7: Trench 3; view north-east



Plate 8: Trench 4; view south



Plate 9: Trench 5; view south-east



Plate 10: Trench 6; view north-west



Plate 11: Trench 7; view south-west

12 APPENDIX 2: TRENCH TABLES

TRENCH 1	Figure 2	Trench Alignment: NE-SW	
Length: 50m	Width: 2m	Level of Natural (m OD): 0.34 - 0.38m	
Deposit	Context No.	Max Thickness (m)	
		SW End	NE End
Topsoil	(100)	0.2m	0.2m
Subsoil	(101)	0.38m	0.35m
Natural	(102)	0.58m+	0.55m+
<p>Summary</p> <p>Trench 1 was in the northernmost area of site. It was positioned in order to assess the archaeological potential (Plate 5).</p> <p>No archaeological activity was uncovered in Trench 1.</p>			

TRENCH 2	Figure 2	Trench Alignment: SE-NW	
Length: 25m	Width: 2m	Level of Natural (m OD): 0.3 - 0.39m	
Deposit	Context No.	Max Thickness (m)	
		SE End	NW End
Topsoil	(100)	0.12m	0.18m
Subsoil	(101)	0.4m	0.4m
Natural	(102)	0.52m+	0.58m+
<p>Summary</p> <p>Trench 2 was in the central area of site. It was positioned in order to assess the archaeological potential (Plate 6).</p> <p>No archaeological activity was uncovered in Trench 2.</p>			

TRENCH 3	Figure 2	Trench Alignment: SW-NE	
Length: 25m	Width: 2m	Level of Natural (m OD): 0.33 - 0.39m	
Deposit	Context No.	Max Thickness (m)	
		SW End	NE End
Topsoil	(100)	0.2m	0.16m
Subsoil	(101)	0.50m	0.44m
Natural	(102)	0.7m+	0.6m+
<p>Summary</p> <p>Trench 3 was in the central area of site. It was positioned in order to assess the archaeological</p>			

potential (Plate 7).

No archaeological activity was uncovered in Trench 3.

TRENCH 4	Figure 2	Trench Alignment: SE-NW	
Length: 25m	Width: 2m	Level of Natural (m OD): 0.24 - 0.4m	
Deposit	Context No.	Max Thickness (m)	
		SE End	NW End
Topsoil	(100)	0.28m	0.3m
Subsoil	(101)	0.40m	0.48m
Natural	(102)	0.68m+	0.78m+
<p>Summary</p> <p>Trench 4 was in the central western area of site. It was positioned in order to assess the archaeological potential (Plate 8).</p> <p>The trench contained two modern land drains ([104] and [106]).</p>			

TRENCH 5	Figure 2	Trench Alignment: WSW-ENE	
Length: 25m	Width: 2m	Level of Natural (m OD): 0.27 - 0.3m	
Deposit	Context No.	Max Thickness (m)	
		SW End	NE End
Topsoil	(100)	0.35m	0.36m
Subsoil	(101)	0.04m	0.09m
Natural	(102)	0.39m+	0.45m+
<p>Summary</p> <p>Trench 5 was in the central eastern area of site. It was positioned in order to assess the archaeological activity (Plate 9).</p> <p>No archaeological activity was uncovered in Trench 5.</p>			

TRENCH 6	Figure 2	Trench Alignment: SE-NW	
Length: 25m	Width: 2m	Level of Natural (m OD): 0.07 - 0.25m	
Deposit	Context No.	Max Thickness (m)	
		SE End	NW End
Topsoil	(100)	0.35m	0.34m
Natural	(102)	0.35m+	0.34m+
<p>Summary</p> <p>Trench 6 was in the central eastern area of site. It was positioned in order to assess the archaeological</p>			

potential (Plate 10).

No archaeological activity was uncovered in Trench 6.

TRENCH 7	Figures 2	Trench Alignment: SW-NE	
Length: 25m	Width: 2m	Level of Natural (m OD): 0.06 - 0.24m	
Deposit	Context No.	Max Thickness (m)	
		SW End	NE End
Topsoil	(100)	0.49m	0.33m
Subsoil	(101)	0.07m	0.11m
Natural	(102)	0.56m+	0.44m+

Summary

Trench 7 was in the southern area of site. It was positioned in order to assess the archaeological activity (Plate 11).

No archaeological activity was uncovered in Trench 7.

13 APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-374789

Project details

Project name Land at Fodder Fen Road, Manea, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation

Short description of the project Seven trial trenches totaling 200m to assess archaeological potential of land for development of a car park for Fenland District Council, Cambridgeshire. No archaeological features or finds were revealed.

Project dates Start: 19-11-2019 End: 20-11-2019

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes ECB6045 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed

Monument type LAND DRAIN Modern

Monument type LAND DRAIN Modern

Significant Finds POTTERY Modern

Methods & techniques "Sample Trenches"

Development type Car park (flat)

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the planning process Pre-application

Project location

Country England

Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE FENLAND MANEA Land at Fodder Fen Road, Manea, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation

Postcode	PE15 0HQ
Study area	0.9 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 4794 9118 52.49803501436 0.179586079553 52 29 52 N 000 10 46 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	Min: 0.06m Max: 0.81m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	Cambridgeshire County Council
Project design originator	Christiane Meckseper
Project director/manager	Christiane Meckseper
Project supervisor	Harvey Furniss
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Fenland District Council

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	CCC County Archaeology Store
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	CCC County Archaeology Store
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Report", "Section"

Entered by	Christiane Meckseper (cmeckseper@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	25 November 2019

PCA

PCA CAMBRIDGE

THE GRANARY, RECTORY FARM
BREWERY ROAD, PAMPISFORD
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB22 3EN
t: 01223 845 522
e: cambridge@pre-construct.com

PCA DURHAM

THE ROPE WORKS, BROADWOOD VIEW
CHESTER-LE-STREET
DURHAM DH3 3AF
t: 0191 377 1111
e: durham@pre-construct.com

PCA LONDON

UNIT 54, BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE
96 ENDWELL ROAD, BROCKLEY
LONDON SE4 2PD
t: 020 7732 3925
e: london@pre-construct.com

PCA NEWARK

OFFICE 8, ROEWOOD COURTYARD
WINKBURN, NEWARK
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NG22 8PG
t: 01636 370 410
e: newark@pre-construct.com

PCA NORWICH

QUARRY WORKS, DEREHAM ROAD
HONINGHAM
NORWICH NR9 5AP
T: 01603 863 108
e: norwich@pre-construct.com

PCA WARWICK

UNIT 9, THE MILL, MILL LANE
LITTLE SHREWLEY, WARWICK
WARWICKSHIRE CV35 7HN
t: 01926 485 490
e: warwick@pre-construct.com

PCA WINCHESTER

5 RED DEER COURT, ELM ROAD
WINCHESTER
HAMPSHIRE SO22 5LX
t: 01962 849 549
e: winchester@pre-construct.com

