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# REDCLYFFE, ELLIOT ROAD, MARCH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



Report Number: R1220

January 2019

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## REDCLYFFE, ELLIOT ROAD, MARCH

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Prepared for:  
L Bevens Associates Architects Ltd

On behalf of  
Snowmountain Enterprises Ltd  
Marwick House  
Station Road  
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<b>Site Code</b>	ECB5749	<b>NGR</b>	TL 4051 9713
<b>Project No.</b>	P1260		
<b>Planning Ref.</b>	F/YR18/0165/F	<b>OASIS</b>	britanni1-334827
		<b>Museum ACC</b>	N/A
<b>Approved By:</b>		<b>Date</b>	January 2019



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### *Abstract*

*On 10th January 2019 Britannia Archaeology Ltd (BA) undertook an archaeological trial trench evaluation at Redclyffe, Elliot Road, March, Cambridgeshire (NGR: TL 4051 9713).*

*The site had a low - moderate potential for finds and features from the early prehistoric and Roman periods. There was a moderate to high potential for remains on the site relating to the post-medieval and modern periods. No features or finds from any period were identified.*

*The evaluation identified no archaeological features. Although an excavation on an adjacent plot found residual evidence of nearby Bronze Age, medieval, and post-medieval inhabitation (Quinn & Mustchin, 2013), it is unlikely that further archaeological intervention would provide meaningful information on site activity pre-dating the 20th century.*



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

On 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 Britannia Archaeology Ltd (BA) undertook an archaeological trial trench evaluation at Redclyffe, Elliot Road, March, Cambridgeshire (NGR: TL 4051 9713) on for Lee Bevens Associates Architects Ltd on behalf of Snowmountain Enterprises Ltd, ahead of the redevelopment of the site.

The work was undertaken in response to a design brief issued by Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (CHET) (Stewart, 2018), requiring a programme of linear trial trenching to adequately sample 5% of the threatened available area.

Two linear trial trenches measuring 1.80m x 25.00m, one measuring 1.80m x 15.00m and one measuring 1.80m x 5.00m were proposed, and a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket was used to excavate the trenches.

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located off Elliot Road, in the west of the village of March. Residential properties are located north, east and west of the site.

### 2.1 Site Geology

The natural bedrock geology is described as Ampthill Clay Formation – Mudstone, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 157 to 164 million years ago in the Jurassic Period when the local environment was previously dominated by shallow seas (BGS, 2019).

No superficial deposits have been recorded at the location of the site at the time of writing, (BGS, 2019).

## 3.0 PLANNING POLICIES

The archaeological investigation is to be carried out on the recommendation of the local planning authority, following guidance laid down by the *National Planning and Policy Framework* (NPPF, DCLD 2018). The relevant local planning policy is the Fenland Local Plan (1993; 2005 Edition).

### 3.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, DCLG July 2018)

The NPPF recognises that 'heritage assets' are an irreplaceable resource and planning authorities should conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance when considering development. It requires developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. The key areas for consideration are:

- The significance of the heritage asset and its setting in relation to the proposed development;



- The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance;
- Significance (of the heritage asset) can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction, or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification;
- Local planning authorities should not permit loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred;
- Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

### *3.2 Fenland Local Plan (1993; 2005 Edition)*

The relevant portion of the local plan for Fenland states:

E6 - Planning permission will not normally be granted for a development which would adversely affect the preservation or setting of an ancient monument or other important archaeological site. The local planning authority will normally require all planning applications for development on sites of recognised or suspected archaeological importance to be accompanied by an archaeological evaluation.

E7 - Where there is no over-riding case for the preservation of an archaeological site and planning permission is granted for its development, that development will be conditional upon the developer making satisfactory provision for the excavation and recording of remains. Such excavation and recording will be carried out before development commences in accordance with a project brief prepared by the local planning authority with advice from County Archaeologists. Where appropriate provision shall be made for the sealing and preservation of archaeologically significant layers prior to construction.

## **4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND (Fig. 2)**

The following archaeological background draws on the Cambridge Historic Environment Record (CHER) (1km search centred on the site), English Heritage PastScape ([www.pastscape.org.uk](http://www.pastscape.org.uk)), and the Archaeological Data Service ([www.ads.ahds.ac.uk](http://www.ads.ahds.ac.uk)) (ADS) (Fig. 2).

### *4.1 Prehistoric*

Mesolithic and Neolithic finds scatters (08455, 10913 and 05210) are located in the vicinity of the site comprising flint finds.

Discrete Early Bronze Age features were encountered approximately 20m west of the site at an evaluation and excavation on Elliot Road (ECB3894), a pit and postholes were also recorded along with an early Bronze Age pottery sherd recovered from a ditch. Described as being tempered with poorly-sorted medium quartz and grog, the three postholes yielded similar sherds. Other material from these features included animal bone and burnt flint.





#### 4.2 Romano-British

The site is located in a historic landscape which includes numerous records of Roman date including find spot for a Roman stamped handle (05905) approximately 500m north east of the site. Other Roman activity has been recorded on the periphery of the search area (MCB18160) in the form Roman ditches and field systems.

#### 4.3 Saxon and Medieval

Medieval records are limited throughout the search area. Medieval features including drainage and boundary ditches were encountered approximately 560m to the south east at an evaluation at Land West of Dartford Road (ECB2511).

#### 4.5 Post-medieval and Modern

March expanded in the post-medieval period with a key feature of this expansion being an increase in the number of dwellings represented by the number of listed buildings located in the village core dating to this period. The closest associated record (ECB3894) from to the site also dates from this period and relates to the adjacent evaluation and excavation that revealed a number of pits and ditches dated post-medieval or early modern by pottery recovered from the features. The following excavation revealed only features of 17th to 18th century and modern date comprising a boundary ditch, building remains and pits relating to the recently demolished piggery.

#### 4.6 Archaeological Potential

Given the above, there was a **low - moderate** potential for finds and features from the early prehistoric and Roman periods. There was a **moderate** to **high** potential for remains on the site relating to the post-medieval and modern periods.

### 5.0 PROJECT AIMS

The CHET brief states that the evaluation should aim to determine, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. An adequate representative sample of all areas where archaeological remains are potentially threatened should be studied (Stewart, G. Brief, Section 3.1).

Both the WSI, fieldwork and resulting report/archiving will be undertaken in accordance with CIfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations, 2014.

All aspects of the trial trenching will be undertaken in accordance with the *CIfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations, 2014* and *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England, 2003*.



## 6.0 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Research objectives for the project were in line with those laid out in *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24 (Medlycott, 2011).

Particular study of the following should occur:

- presence/absence of palaeosols and old land surface soils/deposits,
- the character of deposits and their contents within negative features
- palaeochannels
- site formation processes generally.

An assessment of the environmental potential of the site through examination of suitable deposits must also be arranged with a suitably qualified specialist. Attention should be paid:

- to the retrieval of charred plant macrofossils and land molluscs from former dry-land palaeosols and cut features, and to soil pollen analysis;
- to the retrieval of plant macrofossils, insect, molluscs and pollen from waterlogged deposits located.
- provision for the absolute dating of critical contacts should be made: *eg* the basal contacts of peats over former dryland surfaces; distinct land use or landmark change in urban contexts.

The evaluation should also carefully consider the retrieval, characterisation and dating (including absolute dating) of artefact, burial or economic evidence to assist in the characterisation of the site's evidence and in the development of future mitigation strategies.

## 7.0 FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

The CHET brief requires a programme of linear trial trenching in advance of the construction of the houses and associated works. Two linear trial trenches measuring 1.80m x 25.00m, one measuring 1.80m x 15.00m and one measuring 1.80m x 5.00m

A 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket will be used to machine down to the first archaeological horizon, thereafter all excavation work will be undertaken by hand (Fig. 3).

The archaeology will be recorded using pro-forma record sheets, drawn plans and section drawings and appropriate photographs will also be taken.



## 8.0 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS (Fig. 4 - 6)

A professional metal detector was used to scan the trenches locations prior and post excavation along with the spoil heaps. Only demonstrably modern finds were recovered and therefore were not retained.

Bucket sampling was undertaken whereby a total of 90 litres of spoil from the topsoil and subsoil were hand sorted at 3 points along each trench. Only demonstrably modern finds were present which were not retained.

A summary of the features and layers encountered is presented below. Full context descriptions can be found in Appendix 1.

### 8.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 measured 25.00m in total on a northwest to southeast orientation, which was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.19m. The trench was in the far south of the site and contained no archaeological features.

A rubble layer **1000** was present to a depth of 0.35m. Beneath this was two desiccated fen deposits, **1001** and **1002**, present to a depth of 0.50m and 0.86m respectively. These overlaid a layer of alluvial fen clay present to a depth of 1.19m, which overlaid natural subsoil **1004**.

### 8.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 measured 25.00m in total on a northeast to southwest orientation, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.72m. The trench was located roughly in the centre of the site and contained no archaeological features.

A rubble layer **1000** was present to a depth of 0.32m. Beneath this was an upper desiccated fen deposit, **1001**, which was present to a depth of 0.52m, and a lower desiccated fen deposit, **1002**, present to a depth of 0.72m. This overlay natural subsoil **1004**.

### 8.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 measured 15.00m in total on a north to south orientation, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.80m. The trench was located in the north east of the site and contained no archaeological features.

A layer of tarmac rubble **1000** was present to a depth of 0.39m. Beneath this were two desiccated fen deposits, **1001** and **1002**, which were present to a depth of 0.35m and 0.79m respectively. These overlaid natural subsoil **1004**.



#### 8.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 measured 5.00m in length on an east to west orientation, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.79m. The trench was located at the northern edge of the site and contained no archaeological features.

Modern garden topsoil **1005** was present to a depth of 0.35m, beneath which were two desiccated fen deposit layers, **1001** and **1002**, which were present to depths of 0.64m and 0.79m respectively. These overlaid natural subsoil **1004**.

### 9.0 DEPOSIT MODEL (Fig. 5)

The deposit model was broadly consistent across the site.

At the top of the stratigraphic sequence, across the majority of the site, was rubble layer **1000** which was present to an average depth of 0.34m.

Beneath rubble layer **1000** were two desiccated fen deposits. The first (or 'upper') layer, **1001**, was present to an average depth of 0.56m and overlaid an earlier (or 'lower') layer, **1002**, present to an average depth of 0.79m.

Layer **1003** consisted of alluvial fen clay and was only present in trench 1, where it was found at between 0.86m and 1.19m depth, between layers **1002** and **1004**.

At the base of the sequence, across all the site, was a layer of surviving natural subsoil (**1004**).

Modern garden subsoil **1005** was only present at the top of the stratigraphic sequence in trench 4, and was present to a depth of 0.35m.

Bucket sampling undertaken in each trench, for each identified layer revealed nothing but demonstrably modern finds.

### 10.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The site had a low - moderate potential for finds and features from the early prehistoric and Roman periods. There was a moderate to high potential for remains on the site relating to the post-medieval and modern periods. No features or finds from any period were identified.

The top stratigraphic layer, **1000**, contained both tarmac rubble and asbestos indicating a 20<sup>th</sup>-century date.

The desiccated layers of fenland peat, **1001** and **1002**, were shallow – at only 0.20-0.30m deep – with no topsoil having formed above them. This suggests two brief episodes of



fenland expansion through flooding (or 'fen creep') in relatively quick succession. Both were open for long enough after initial flooding to dry and desiccate, but not long enough for a topsoil to form.

Alluvial fen clay, layer **1003**, was identified only in trench 1 in the south of the site. This suggests the northern part of the site was, historically, at a higher elevation than the south, in the south the land was lower, probably as part of a decline towards the river Nene.

Layer **1005** is modern garden soil and was found only in trench 4 in the north of the site. It was likely deposited during the habitation of the current dwelling or its direct predecessor.

### *Conclusion*

The evaluation identified no archaeological features. Although an excavation on an adjacent plot found residual evidence of nearby Bronze Age, medieval, and post-medieval inhabitation (Quinn & Mustchin, 2013), it is unlikely that further archaeological intervention would provide meaningful information on site activity pre-dating the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **11.0 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION**

Arrangements will be made for the archive to be deposited with the Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team, subject to agreement with the legal landowner where finds are concerned. The digital archive will be stored with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).

## **12.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Britannia Archaeology would like to thank L Bevens Associates Architects Ltd for commissioning and funding the project.

We would also like to thank Gemma Stewart from Cambridgeshire County Council for her advice and assistance on the project.

The site was excavated by Martin Brook, Dan McConnell, and Matthew Selfe of Britannia Archaeology Ltd.



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English Heritage PastScape [www.pastscape.org.uk](http://www.pastscape.org.uk)

Archaeological Data Service (ADS) [www.ads.ahds.ac.uk](http://www.ads.ahds.ac.uk)

English Heritage National List for England  
[www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england)



Redclyffe, Elliott Road, March  
Written Scheme of Investigation  
Trial Trench Evaluation

DEFRA Magic <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/website/magic>



## APPENDIX 1 DEPOSIT TABLES

### TRENCH 1

Trench No	Orientation	Height AOD	Shot ID
1	NW-SE	2.63m	2
Sample Section No	Location	Facing	
1	Centre, SW side	NE	
Context No	Depth	Deposit Description	
1000	0.00-0.35m	Rubble layer: Light orange-brown, compact rubble dust.	
1001	0.35-0.50m	Desiccated fen deposit (upper): Dark brown/black, compact silty sand and clay.	
1002	0.50-0.86m	Desiccated fen deposit (lower): Mid-grey/brown, compact silty sand and clay.	
1003	0.86-1.19m	Alluvial fen clay layer: Mid-grey/green/blue, compact silty clay.	
1004	1.19m+	Natural: Light orange/yellow/brown, compact silty clay.	

### TRENCH 2

Trench No	Orientation	Height AOD	Shot ID
2	NE-SW	2.73m	4
Sample Section No	Location	Facing	
2	Centre, SE side	NW	
Context No	Depth	Deposit Description	
1000	0.00-0.32m	Rubble layer: Light orange-brown, compact rubble dust.	
1001	0.32-0.52m	Desiccated fen deposit (upper): Dark brown/black, compact silty sand and clay.	
1002	0.52-0.72m	Desiccated fen deposit (lower): Mid-grey/brown, compact silty sand and clay.	
1004	0.72m+	Natural: Light orange/yellow/brown, compact silty clay.	

### TRENCH 3

Trench No	Orientation	Height AOD	Shot ID
3	N-S	2.82m	6
Sample Section No	Location	Facing	
3	Centre, E side	W	
Context No	Depth	Deposit Description	
1000	0.00-0.39m	Rubble layer: Light orange-brown, compact rubble dust.	
1001	0.39-0.57m	Desiccated fen deposit (upper): Dark brown/black, compact silty sand and clay.	
1002	0.57-0.80m	Desiccated fen deposit (lower): Mid-grey/brown, compact silty sand and clay.	
1004	0.80m+	Natural: Light orange/yellow/brown, compact silty clay.	





## TRENCH 4

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Orientation</b>	<b>Height AOD</b>	<b>Shot ID</b>
4	E-W	2.81m	8
<b>Sample Section No</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Facing</b>	
4	Centre, N side	S	
<b>Context No</b>	<b>Depth</b>	<b>Deposit Description</b>	
1005	0.00-0.35m	Garden topsoil: Dark brown/black, loose silty sand.	
1001	0.35-0.64m	Desiccated fen deposit (upper): Dark brown/black, compact silty sand and clay.	
1002	0.64-0.79m	Desiccated fen deposit (lower): Mid-grey/brown, compact silty sand and clay.	
1004	0.79m+	Natural: Light orange/yellow/brown, compact silty clay.	



## APPENDIX 2 – OASIS SHEET

# OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Manage Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

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**OASIS ID: britanni1-334827**

### Project details

Project name	Redclyffe, Elliott Road, March
Short description of the project	On 10th January 2019 Britannia Archaeology Ltd (BA) undertook an archaeological trial trench evaluation at Redclyffe, Elliot Road, March, Cambridgeshire (NGR: TL 4051 9713). The site had a low - moderate potential for finds and features from the early prehistoric and Roman periods. There was a moderate to high potential for remains on the site relating to the post-medieval and modern periods. No features or finds from any period were identified. The evaluation identified no archaeological features. Although an excavation on an adjacent plot found residual evidence of nearby Bronze Age, medieval, and post-medieval inhabitation (Quinn and Mustchin, 2013), it is unlikely that further archaeological intervention would provide meaningful information on site activity pre-dating the 20th century.
Project dates	Start: 10-01-2019 End: 10-01-2019
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ECB5749 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

### Project location



Publication type  
Title Redclyffe, Elliott Road, March  
Author(s)/Editor (s) Stone. A  
Other bibliographic details R1220  
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URL [www.britannia-archaeology.com](http://www.britannia-archaeology.com)  
  
Entered by Martin Brook ([martin@brit-arch.com](mailto:martin@brit-arch.com))  
Entered on 18 January 2019

## OASIS:

Please e-mail [Historic England](mailto:Historic England) for OASIS help and advice  
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Country England  
Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE FENLAND MARCH Redclyffe, Elliott Road, March  
Postcode PE158BP  
Study area 0 Hectares  
Site coordinates TL 4051 9713 52.55346611661 0.072716405088 52 33 12 N 000 04 21 E Point  
Lat/Long Datum Unknown  
Height OD / Depth Min: 0m Max: 0m

#### Project creators

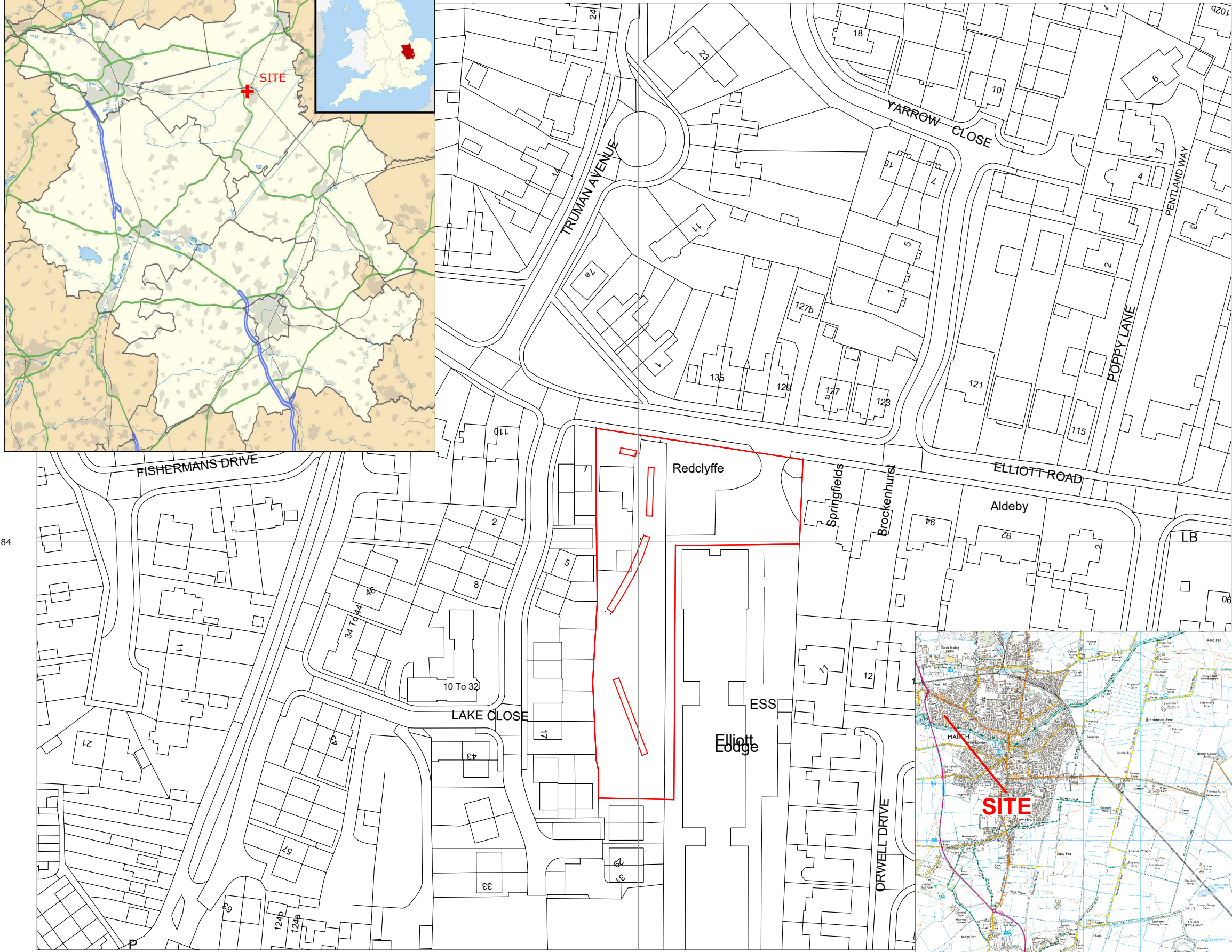
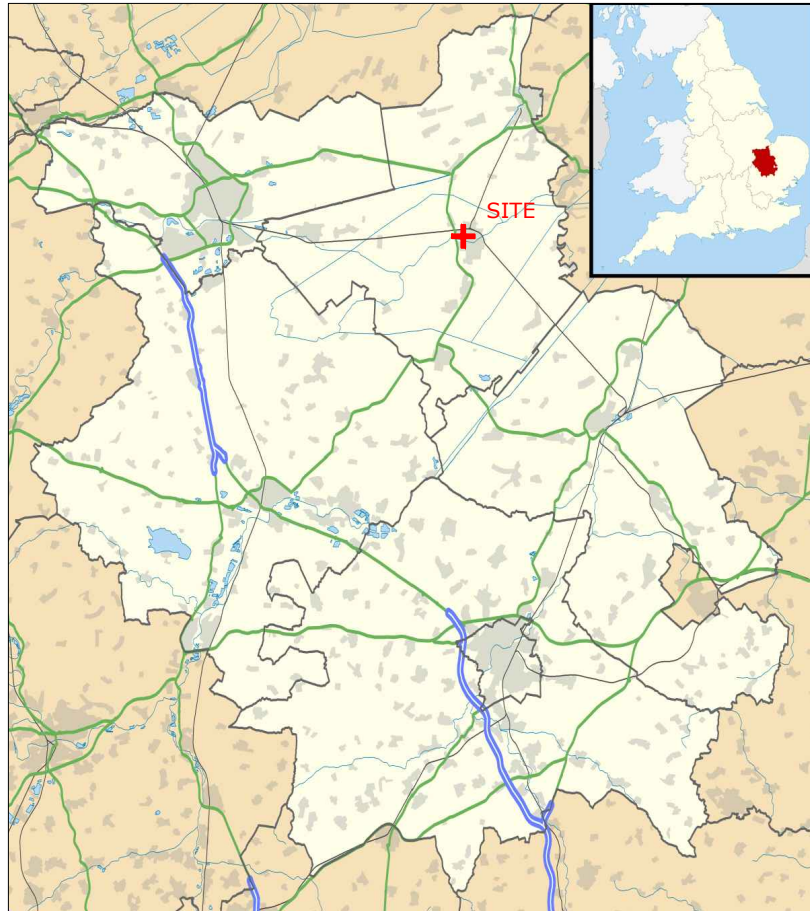
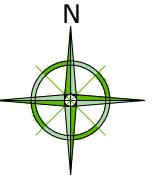
Name of Organisation Britannia Archaeology Ltd  
Project brief originator Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)  
Project design originator Martin Brook  
Project director/manager Martin Brook  
Project supervisor Martin Brook  
Type of sponsor/funding body Developer  
Name of sponsor/funding body Snowmountain Enterprises Ltd

#### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No  
Digital Archive recipient Cambridgeshire HER  
Digital Archive ID ECB5749  
Digital Contents "none"  
Digital Media available "Database","GIS","Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"  
Paper Archive recipient Cambridgeshire HER  
Paper Archive ID ECB5749  
Paper Contents "none"  
Paper Media available "Context sheet","Correspondence","Drawing","Map","Photograph","Plan","Section","Survey"

#### Project bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

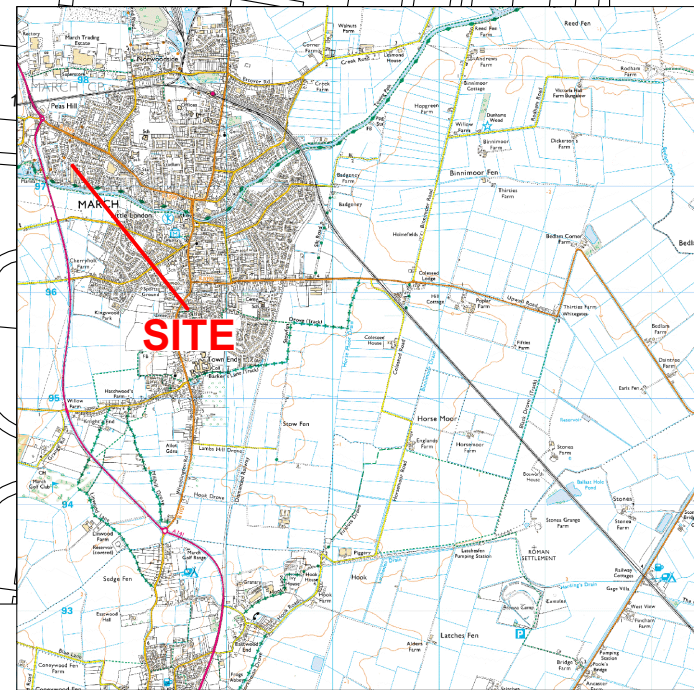


 Site Boundary

297184

1:1250 0 1:1250 50m

540520



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NGR: 540520 297184 REF: R1220

PROJECT: REDCLYFFE, ELLIOT ROAD, MARCH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION: GENERAL LOCATION PLAN

CLIENT: L BEVENS ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS LTD

**BRITANNIA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**



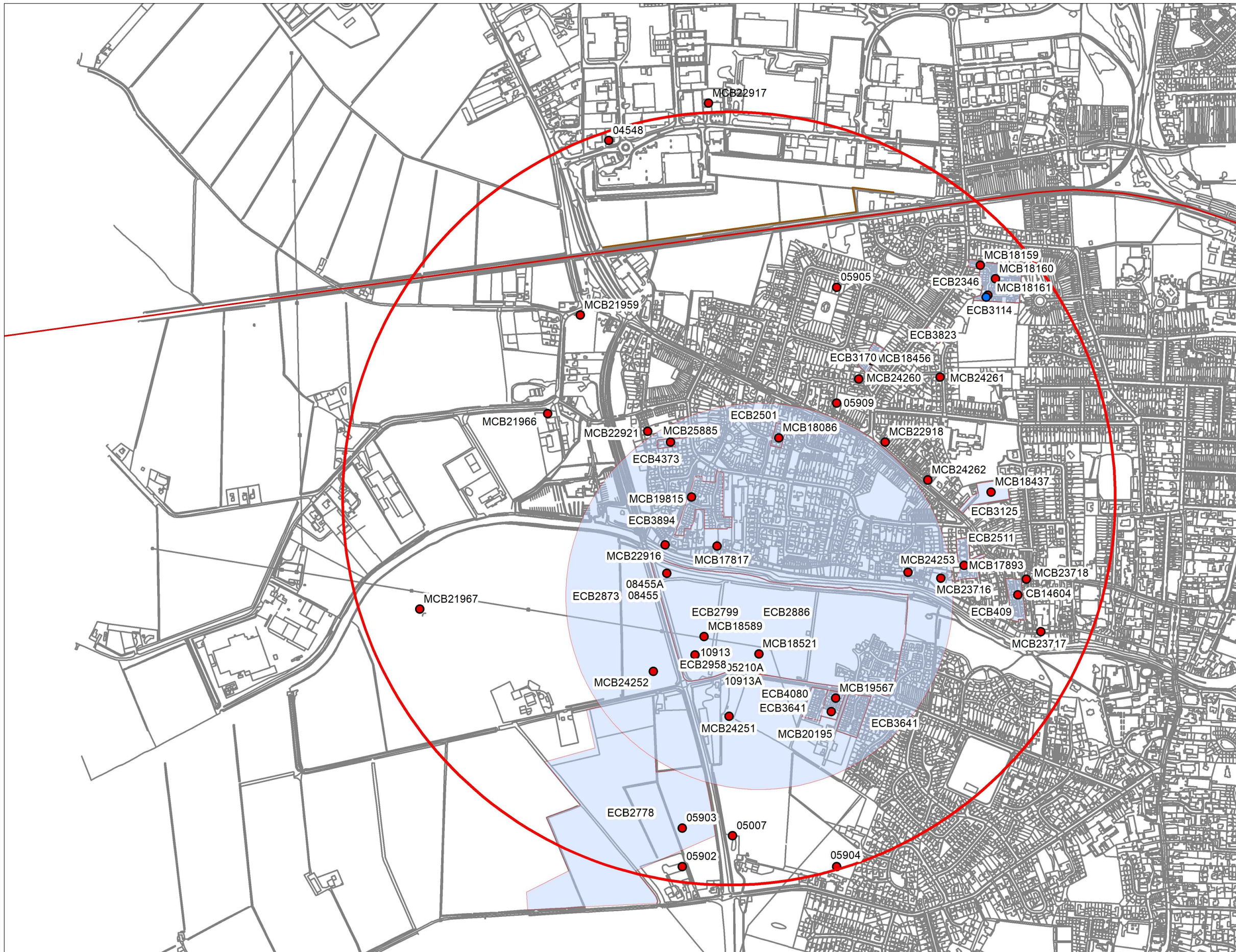
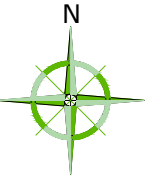
UNIT 2  
THE OLD WOOL WAREHOUSE  
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DATE: JAN 2019 PLOT: A3 VERSION: 1

AUTHOR: DPM  
APPROVED: MB

FIGURE: 1



-  HER Search Area
-  Archaeological Event
-  Archaeological Monument
-  Site Boundary

NGR: 540520 297184 REF: R1220

PROJECT: REDCLYFFE, ELLIOT ROAD, MARCH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION: CHER DATA - EVENTS & MONUMENTS

CLIENT: L BEVENS ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS LTD

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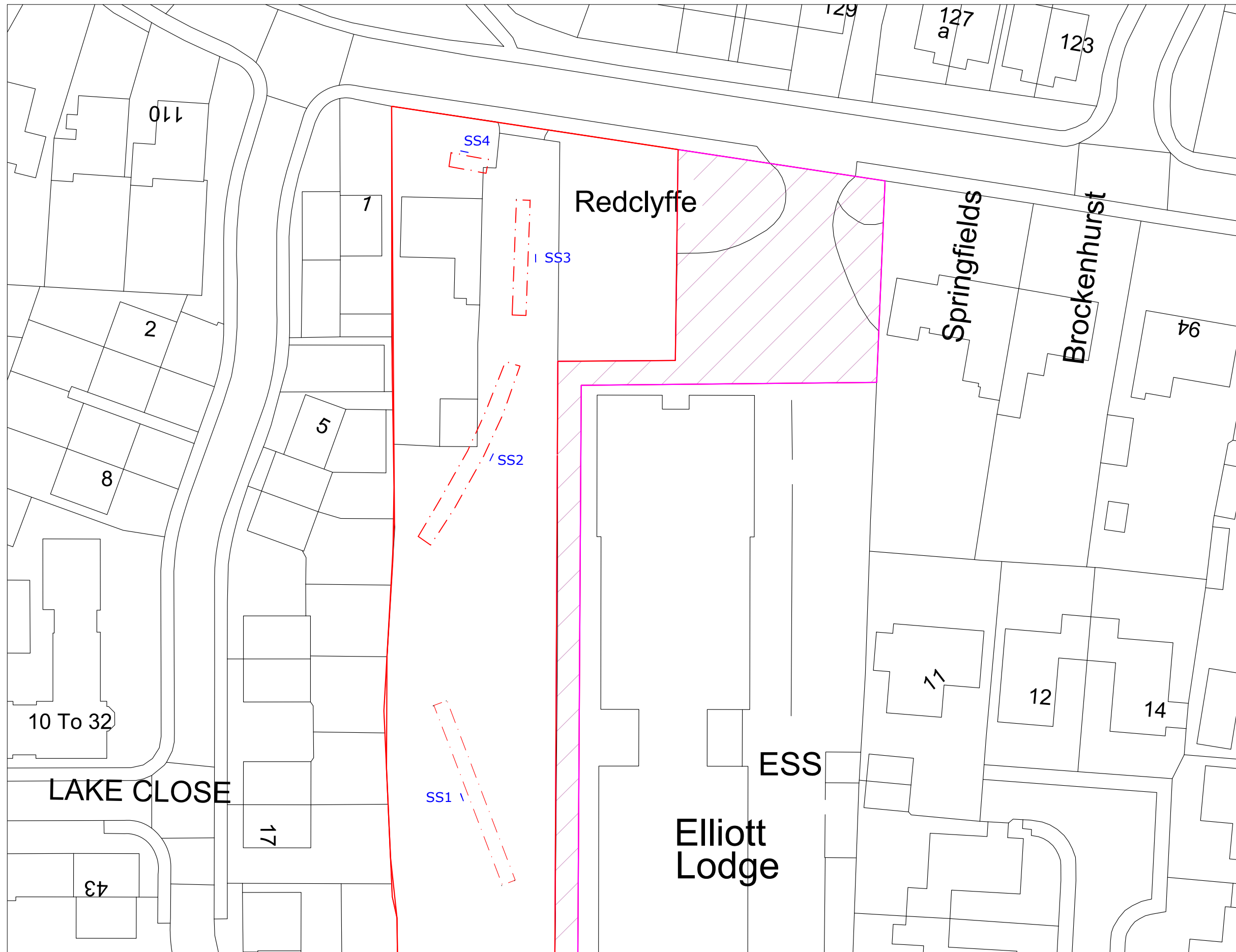
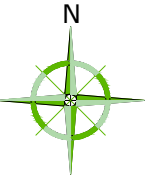
DATE: JAN 2019 PLOT: A3 VERSION: 1





AUTHOR: DPM

APPROVED: MB

FIGURE: 2

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-  Sample Section
-  Area to be Retained as Carpark/Buffer
-  Trench
-  Site Boundary

NGR: 540520 297184 REF: R1220

PROJECT: REDCLYFFE, ELLIOT ROAD, MARCH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION: TRENCH PLAN

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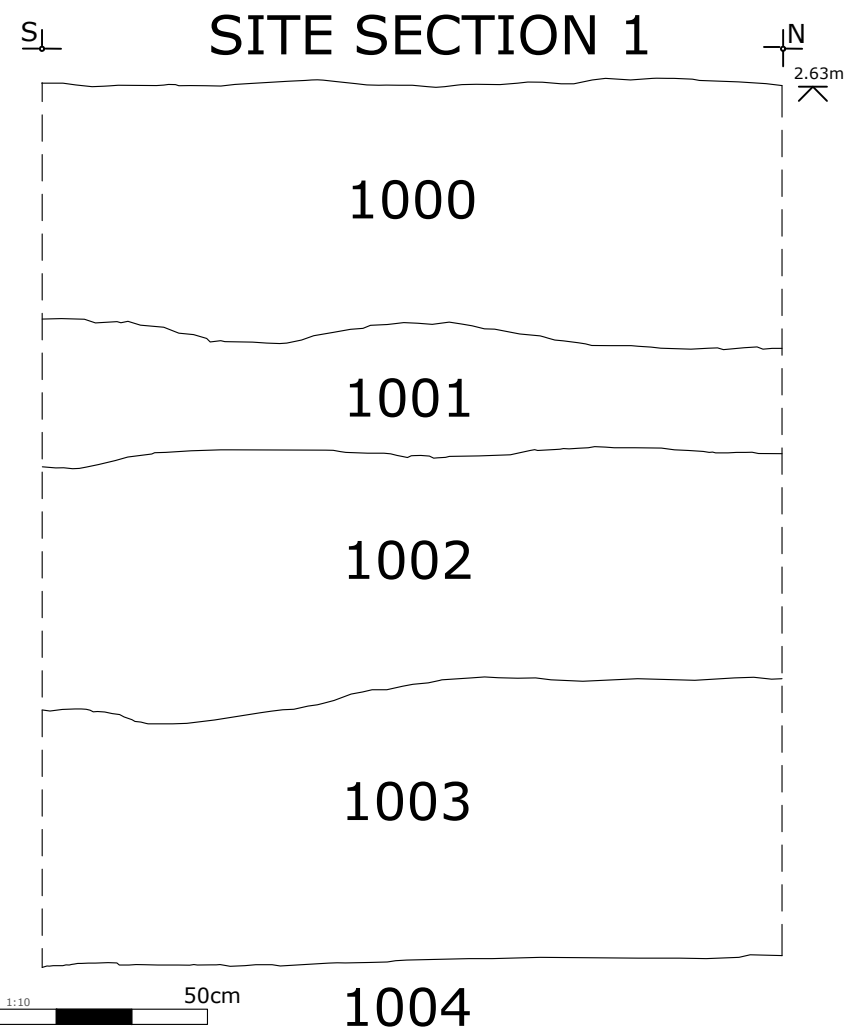
AUTHOR: DPM

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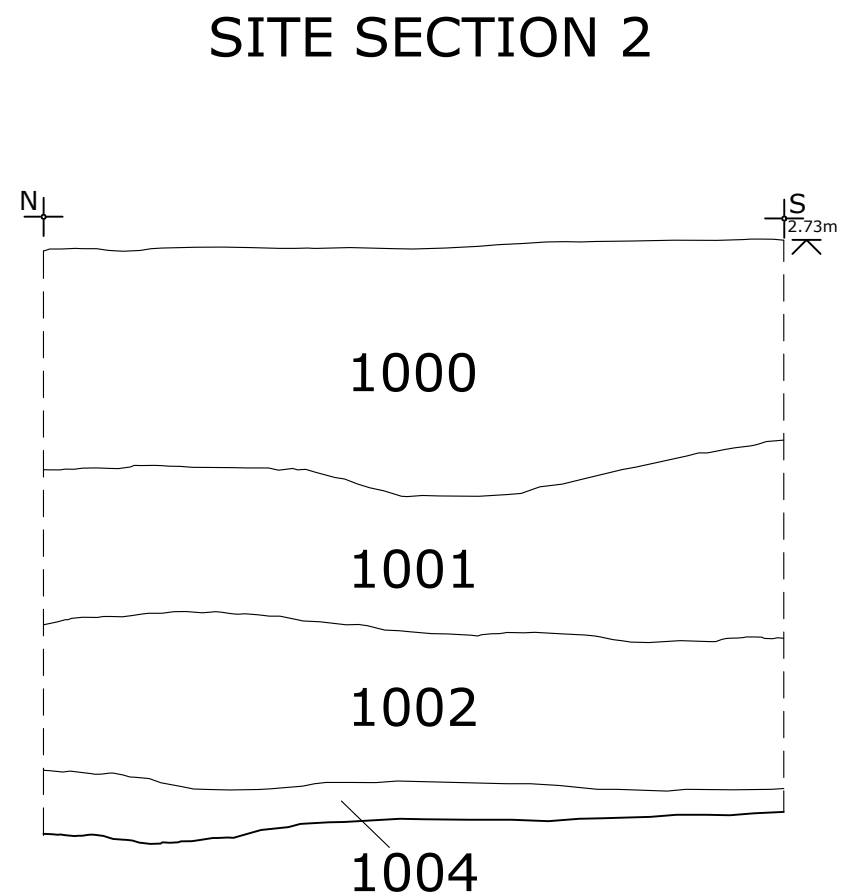
FIGURE: 3



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**SS1 - DP2 - VIEW W**



**SS2 - DP4 - VIEW E**

NGR: 540520 297184 REF: R1220

PROJECT: REDCLYFFE, ELLIOT ROAD, MARCH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION: SITE SECTIONS & PHOTOGRAPHS

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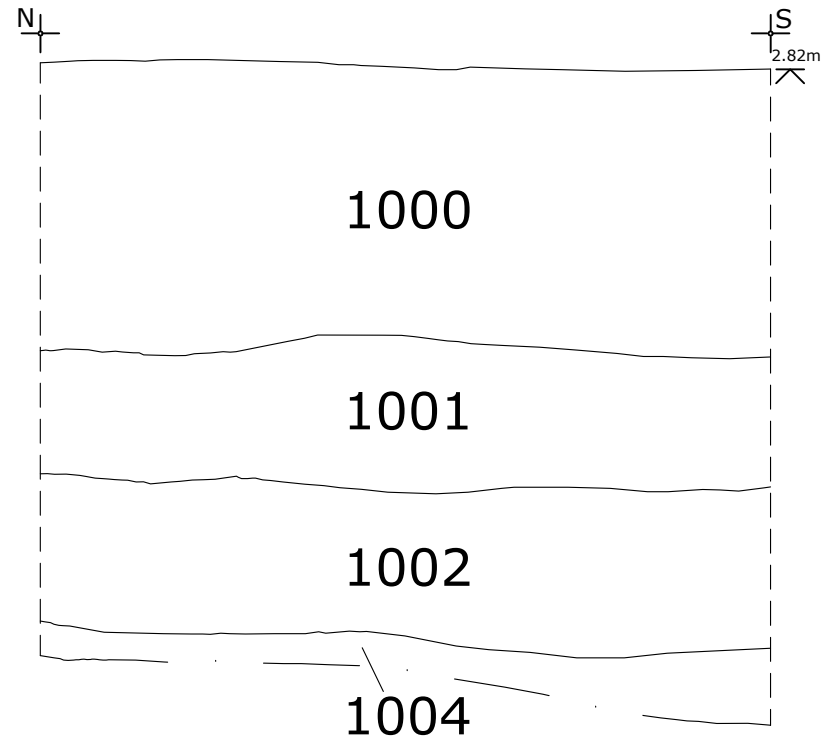
DATE: JAN 2019 PLOT: A3 VERSION: 1

AUTHOR: MS APPROVED: DPM

FIGURE: 4



### SITE SECTION 3

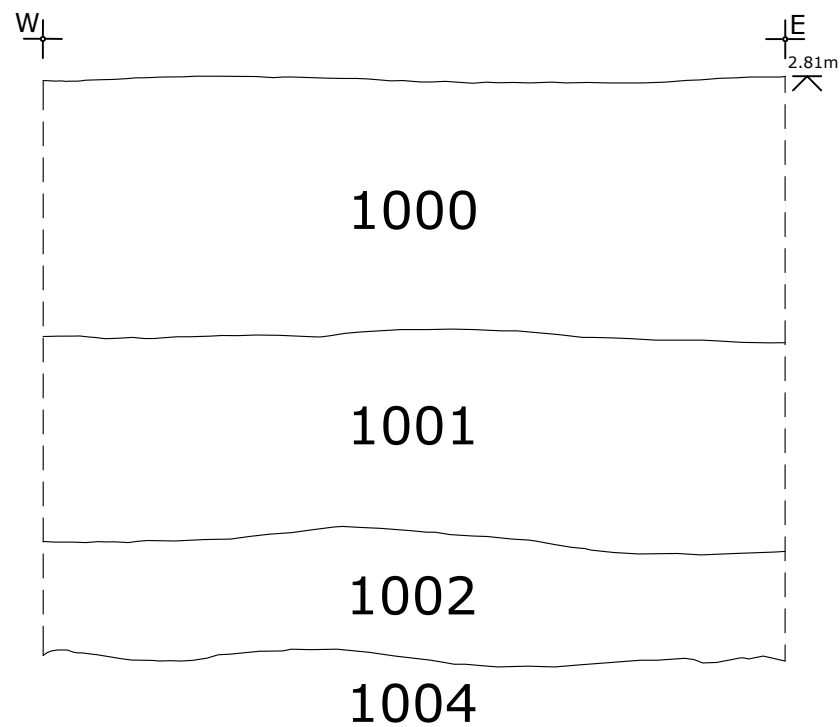


1:10 0 1:10 50cm



SS3 - DP6 - VIEW E

### SITE SECTION 4



1:10 0 1:10 50cm



SS4 - DP8 - VIEW N

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PROJECT:	REDCLYFFE, ELLIOT ROAD, MARCH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE		
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AUTHOR:	MS	VERSION:	1
APPROVED:	DPM	FIGURE:	5



Trench 1 Post Excav - View SE



Trench 2 Post Excav - View NE



Trench 3 Post Excav - View N



Trench 4 Post Excav - View E

NGR:	540520 297184	REF:	R1220
PROJECT:	REDCLYFFE, ELLIOT ROAD, MARCH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE		
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		VERSION:	1
AUTHOR:	MS	FIGURE:	6
APPROVED:	DPM		